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Epiphanius' *Alogi* and the Question of Early Ecclesiastical Opposition to the
Johannine Corpus

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Ph.D. Thesis

The University of Edinburgh

2012

Declaration

I composed this thesis, the work is my own. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

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ABSTRACT

The Johannine literature has been a cornerstone of Christian theology throughout the history of the church. However it is often argued that the church in the late second century and early third century was actually opposed to these writings because of questions concerning their authorship and role within “heterodox” theologies. Despite the axiomatic status that this so-called “Johannine Controversy” has achieved, there is surprisingly little evidence to suggest that the early church actively opposed the Johannine corpus.

This thesis is a detailed study of the primary evidence recorded by the fourth-century Church Father, Epiphanius of Salamis, which is the earliest record to explicitly note ecclesiastical opposition towards the Gospel and Apocalypse of John, taken together. In his *Panarion*, Epiphanius states that a group called the “*Alogi*” rejected the Gospel and Apocalypse of John, and attributed both to the heretic Cerinthus. He does not record any identifying features of this group’s provenance, theology or constituency; rather he only notes two objections that these *Alogi* had against the Gospel of John, and three against the Apocalypse. The identity of this group remained a mystery for centuries until consideration was given to the testimonies of two later Syrian writers who indicate that a certain “Gaius” made similar criticisms against the Gospel and Apocalypse of John in a debate with Hippolytus of Rome. As a result, the consensus view throughout modern scholarship is that an early churchman, Gaius of Rome, was the leader of this group that sought to eradicate the Johannine corpus from the church, and that Epiphanius as well as the later Syrian writers used a work of Hippolytus, now lost, as the primary source of their information.

This thesis is a careful examination of the evidence that supports the theory that the early church actively opposed the Johannine literature. Thus, particular attention is given to the testimony of Epiphanius concerning the *Alogi*. It is demonstrated here that when priority is given to the early evidence, the *Alogi* is a fictional heretical sect, created by Epiphanius from various testimonies to account for what he believed to be antagonism primarily against the Gospel of John, and secondarily the Apocalypse. The later Syrian evidence is also examined in light of the early evidence, not the other way around, as is often the case. As a result, these

sources are shown to be less reliable in their portrayal of the early reception of the Johannine literature than has previously been recognized.

The first section of this thesis engages the question regarding the likelihood that Epiphanius derived his knowledge of this group from an earlier work of Hippolytus. The internal and external evidence about this group suggest that it is Epiphanius' own creation. The second section explores the testimonies of earlier writers, namely Papias, Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius and Dionysius of Alexandria, and the way in which Epiphanius used these sources in the construction of this heresy. The third and final section critically examines the reliability of the later Syrian evidence concerning Gaius and his supposed ties to the *Alogi*. I argue that these later sources are not as reliable as many scholars maintain, and that Gaius of Rome was not associated with the *Alogi*, nor was he a heretic.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is the product of my time as a doctoral student at New College. Thanks go first to my supervisor, Dr. Sara Parvis, for her constant support, guidance, and generosity throughout my research. I also wish to thank my second supervisor, Dr. Paul Foster, for his support, encouragement, and perspective. In addition, Dr. Paul Parvis has generously given much time, attention, and advice at various points throughout my research.

To my parents, Tim and Beth Manor, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for their love, encouragement, and generosity. The sincerity of their Christian faith has challenged and influenced my own. Without their overwhelming generosity this wonderful experience would not have been possible.

Most of all, my deepest gratitude and appreciation belong to my wife, Rebecca. Her constant support and encouragement provided a source of strength and motivation throughout this journey. Her joy and sense of humor ensured that I maintained a balanced perspective. Her intellect, editorial eye, countless hours of discussing and reading my work, and genuine interest in this project have influenced every single page of the thesis. It is to her that I dedicate this work.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Adv. Marc.</i>	Tertullian, <i>Adversus Marcionem</i>
<i>Adv. omn. haer.</i>	Pseudo Tertullian, <i>Adversus omnium haereseum</i>
<i>Adv. Val.</i>	Tertullian, <i>Adversus Valentinianos</i>
<i>AH</i>	Irenaeus, <i>Adversus Haereses</i>
<i>Ancor.</i>	Epiphanius, <i>Ancoratus</i>
<i>Ant.</i>	Hippolytus, <i>De Antichristo</i>
<i>Bibl.</i>	Photius, <i>Bibliotheca</i>
<i>BO</i>	Bibliotheca Orientalis
<i>C. Cels</i>	Origen, <i>Contra Celsum</i>
<i>Comm. Apoc.</i>	Dionysius bar Salibi, <i>In Apocalypsim, Actus et Epistulas Catholicas</i>
<i>Comm. Jo.</i>	Origen, <i>Commentarium in Joannem</i>
<i>CSCO</i>	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
<i>CSEL</i>	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
<i>Dan.</i>	Hippolytus, <i>Commentarium in Danielelem</i>
<i>De Prin.</i>	Origen, <i>De Principiis</i>
<i>De vir. ill.</i>	Jerome, <i>De Viris Illustribus</i>
<i>Dial.</i>	Justin Martyr, <i>Dialogus cum Tryphoni</i>
<i>Div. her. lib.</i>	Philaster, <i>Diversarum heresion liber</i>
<i>GCS</i>	Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller
<i>Haer.</i>	Epiphanius, <i>Panarion</i>
<i>Haer. fab. comp.</i>	Theodoret, <i>Haereticarum fabularum compendium</i>
<i>HE</i>	Eusebius, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
<i>Hom. Luc.</i>	Origen, <i>Homilia in Lucam</i>
<i>HTR</i>	Harvard Theological Review
<i>JBL</i>	Journal of Biblical Literature

<i>JECS</i>	Journal of Early Christian Studies
<i>JEH</i>	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
<i>JTS</i>	Journal of Theological Studies
<i>NovT</i>	Novum Testamentum
<i>PG</i>	Migne, Patrologia Graeca
<i>PTS</i>	Patristische Texte und Studien
<i>Ref.</i>	Hippolytus, <i>Refutatio Omnium Haeresium</i>
<i>SC</i>	Sources Chrétiennes
<i>TU</i>	Texte und Untersuchungen
<i>TZ</i>	Theologische Zeitschrift
<i>VC</i>	Vigiliae Christianae
<i>WUNT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche

*All translations are my own, except where otherwise indicated.

Introduction

Despite the profound influence that the Johannine corpus has had on Christian theology throughout history, its acceptance and role in the earliest years of Christianity has been a matter of debate for a long time. Scholarship has produced numerous works on the reception of the Johannine literature, which have focused primarily on the questions regarding which person or group was responsible for their authorship, when and by whom these works were first used, and which theological group(s) they originally supported. Numerous studies are devoted to the question of whether the Johannine corpus was originally a “heretical” production, or if it was always considered to be a part of the accepted writings within the “orthodox” church.¹

Such inquiries are critically important in seeking to determine the place of the Johannine corpus in the development of the church’s canon of accepted writings. Indeed, the varying hypotheses that have emerged from these studies demonstrate the sheer complexity of the evidence from this era. Nevertheless, there is one common formulation of the evidence that has received widespread acceptance over the past century of scholarship, which postulates that the early church was originally very

¹ I use the terms “orthodoxy”, “ecclesiastical”, “heresy” and “heterodoxy” as well as other similar terms despite the fact that such designations are inherently anachronistic and imprecise. The questions concerning the use of these terms are perhaps best articulated in the work of Walter Bauer, which stands as one of the true gems of twentieth century scholarship. See Walter Bauer, *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1934), ET, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, eds. Robert A. Kraft and Gerhard Krodel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971). Although many of his conclusions have drawn serious questions and intense criticism – this work is no exception – perhaps the greatest achievement of this work was its appreciation and articulation of the complexity of the theological world in the first centuries of Christianity. Thus, terms such as “orthodoxy” and “heresy” do not accurately capture the variety of forms within earliest Christianity, or *perhaps* even what comprised the “majority” and “minority” representative factions. However, in my estimation, alternative terms such as “proto-orthodox” or “proto-catholic” do not provide a satisfactory recasting of the language and perceived notions of such terms. They only serve to blur the standard vocabulary, to soften its edges; they do not provide new, non-anachronistic and stable categories of understanding the various theological distinctions and divisions within the early church. Moreover, it is not necessarily the case that there was a lack of some discernible form of what was to become orthodox Christianity in the first two centuries. The witness of the early Fathers and the broad coherence of their theological tenets are not as volatile and incoherent as Bauer suggests. Nevertheless, as with Bauer (xxii-xxiii), in this work I shall use the terms “orthodoxy” and “heresy” along with their synonyms and derivative terms to represent what one customarily understands them to suggest, with the unfortunate realization that such language continues to fail to adequately express the complex world of earliest Christianity.

reticent, if not opposed to accepting the Johannine corpus. The present study calls into question the viability of this consensus view.²

It is often said that the early church's opposition to the Johannine corpus is seen most clearly in regards to John's Gospel. Many scholars agree that those who first appropriated this text in support of their theology were heretical groups such as the Gnostics, Montanists and Docetists. As these heretics continued to utilize John's Gospel, the early church was distancing itself from it more and more. C. K. Barrett sums up the standard view well, "To trace the influence of the fourth gospel upon Christian theology would be more than the task of a lifetime; to trace its influence upon the thought of the first half of the second century is easy, for it had none."³

Thus, for the early church to have accepted the Fourth Gospel would have threatened early Christianity by implicitly endorsing and potentially adopting the views of the heretics that seemed to prefer this Gospel. In contrast, to reject John's Gospel as a heretical forgery would serve to rid the church of these cancerous, heretical opinions. The choice was clear; so also was the decision: the early church threw the Johannine baby out with the heretical bathwater. This rejection originally took the form of silence towards the Fourth Gospel by the Apostolic Fathers, and it eventually graduated into explicit rejection.⁴ Indeed, the watershed moment when John's Gospel finally emerged onto the orthodox scene came by way of Irenaeus' treatise, *Adversus Haereses*, where his use of John's Gospel is transformed from a liability to an asset in his efforts to condemn and eradicate various heresies.⁵

² A full survey of scholarship that comprises this consensus view on the role of the Johannine literature in the early church is provided in Chapter 1. For a succinct summary, see esp. Ch. 1.3.

³ C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (London: SPCK, 1955), 52.

⁴ As Bauer notes, "If we listen to the sources without prejudice, it seems to me that this is the result: a current of caution with regard to the gospel of John runs continuously through *ecclesiastical* Rome, that center of orthodoxy, right up to almost the end of the second century – a mood that manifests itself through silence and through explicit rejection." Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 208. All citations of this work will follow the pagination of the English translation.

⁵ In addition to Walter Bauer, other notable works on this topic include (but are by no means limited to): A. Bludau, *Die Ersten Gegner der Johannesschriften* (Freiburg: Herder & Co., 1925); J.N. Sanders, *The Fourth Gospel in the Early Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943); the unpublished dissertation of M.R. Hillmer, "The Gospel of John in the Second Century," (Th.D. diss., Harvard University, 1966); Hans von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*, trans. John A. Baker (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1972); E. Haenchen, *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John Chapters 1-6*, trans. R.W. Funk (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984); R.M. Grant, "The Fourth Gospel and the Church," *HTR* 35, n. 2 (April 1942): 95-116; T.E. Pollard, *Johannine Christology and the Early Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); J. Charlesworth, *The Beloved Disciple: Whose Witness Validates the Gospel of John?* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press

Yet the Fourth Gospel was not the only Johannine work to have a mixed reception. Initially, particularly in the west, the Johannine Apocalypse enjoyed positive welcome and near universal attribution to John the Apostle in the decades after its composition. However, about the same time that the Gospel of John was finding its rightful place in some of the Church Fathers' lists of accepted works, the Apocalypse was beginning to disappear, for it too had ties with an assortment of heresies. Some questioned its use by the Montanists, while others claimed it was the work of the arch-heretic Cerinthus. By the fourth century it had vanished from the canonical lists of Cyril of Jerusalem and Gregory of Nazianzus, and Eusebius of Caesarea is at best ambivalent towards this work. Yet, questions regarding its authenticity and theology had begun a century earlier with Dionysius of Alexandria, who had his own suspicions about its authorship and its chiliastic eschatology.

When all of the evidence is assembled together, the scholarly consensus is that the early church was initially hostile to the idea of accepting both the Gospel and Apocalypse of John. It is undeniable that the evidence surrounding the authority and acceptance of these works in the first centuries of Christendom is complex and at times disjointed, but does the evidence necessarily point to the conclusion that the early church had originally set its face against those works that would later steer Christian theology for centuries to come?

This question has been at the center of an emerging trend in recent scholarship to reassess the accuracy of the consensus view. Most notably, Charles E. Hill, in his important work, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church*, aims to counteract the view that he dubs "orthodox Johannophobia".⁶ Hill is not alone. Other scholars have questioned whether the influence of the Johannine corpus in the early church, especially that of the Fourth Gospel, has been underestimated.⁷ These

International, 1995); R.A.Culpepper, *John: The Son of Zebedee, the Life of a Legend* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000).

⁶ C.E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁷ See especially the collection of essays in T. Rasimus, ed., *The Legacy of John: Second-Century Reception of the Fourth Gospel. NovTSupp 132* (Leiden: Brill, 2010). Other notable works include: M. Hengel, *The Johannine Question* (London: SCM Press, 1989) and eadem, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ* (London: SCM Press, 2000); Titus Nagel, *Die Rezeption des Johannesevangeliums im 2. Jahrhundert: Studien zur vorirenäischen Auslegung des vierten Evangeliums in christlich-gnostischer Literatur. Arbeiten Zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte, 2* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2000); Kyle Keefer, *The Branches of the Gospel of John: The Reception of the Fourth Gospel in the Early Church* (New York: T&T Clark, 2006). Also, Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 2006); eadem, "Papias and Polycrates on the Origin of the Fourth Gospel," *JTS* 44 (1993): 24-69;

studies provide new and valuable considerations regarding the extent of early orthodox appropriation of the Johannine literature. However, despite all the ink that has been spilled in the various efforts to discern whether and to what extent the early church did, in fact, use the Johannine literature, there has been surprisingly little attention paid to the evidence concerning whether or not the early church actively opposed these writings. This is a critical issue that should not be divorced from the question of the ecclesiastical reception of the Johannine writings.

Indeed, the methodological approach of delimiting the use of the Johannine writings in early Christianity does not necessarily indicate whether or not they were fully rejected or entirely accepted. For example, just because the Gospel of John is not explicitly cited among the Apostolic Fathers, this does not necessarily mean that they rejected it. This is, after all, an argument from silence. However, one should also exercise caution in regards to counter claims. Just because there is some evidence to suggest that the Gospel of John was known and used by some within orthodoxy, this does not demand the conclusion that it was widely and positively received. It is equally plausible to conclude that such evidence may only represent smaller segments of early Christianity that found it acceptable, while others did not. Thus, the question of how and to what extent the Gospel of John was used or ignored cannot produce adequate results to the question of whether or not the early church actively opposed it. In order to arrive at the answer to this question, it is necessary to begin from a different starting point that focuses directly on the evidence concerning such opposition.

Thus, where exactly does one find evidence that the early church actively engaged in a campaign against the Johannine literature? After all, if the early ecclesiastical leadership made efforts to expunge these texts from the church, it is natural to expect to find some evidence of their anti-Johannine campaign. If it was a widespread phenomenon, as is often argued, there should be quite an abundance of evidence. There is, however, surprisingly little. It is not until the fourth century that one finds explicit testimony regarding a faction within the church that rejected the Johannine writings as heretical forgeries. Epiphanius of Salamis is the earliest extant

Charles E. Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). Another forthcoming collection of essays is likely to echo these concerns: Peter Head (ed.), *Historical and Literary Studies in John: Challenging Current Paradigms*. WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming).

witness to record the anti-Johannine views of this group known as the *Alogi*. Although this heresy has achieved a significant level of notoriety in New Testament and Patristics scholarship, many scholars have taken for granted a very simple premise for which there is no evidence: that the *Alogi* actually existed.

Epiphanius' Alogi and the Early Orthodox Opposition to the Johannine Corpus

In the last quarter of the fourth century, Epiphanius compiled a catalogue of heresies known as the *Panarion*, or “medicine chest”, which served to provide a set of remedies for the toxic bites of the snake-like heresies. The *Panarion* was Epiphanius’ response to the request of two presbyters, Acacius and Paul, for a catalogue of heresies to be avoided. Though he was certainly not the first to compile such a list of heresies, Epiphanius is the earliest extant witness that mentions a certain group that explicitly rejected the Gospel and Apocalypse of John and attributed both to the heretic Cerinthus. He devotes the fifty-first entry of his *Panarion* to this heresy, and he furnishes them with a name: the *Alogi*.

Chronologically, Epiphanius places these *Alogi* immediately after the Quartodecimans (*Haer.* 50) and before the Noetians (*Haer.* 57), thus some time in the late second or early third centuries. This being the case, one might expect to find some evidence of the *Alogi*’s existence in the writings of other contemporary Church Fathers. Yet it is baffling that the great heresy-hunters such as Irenaeus and Hippolytus do not expound upon such a heretical group. The *Alogi* do not appear in Irenaeus’ list of heresies, nor do they find a home in Hippolytus’ *Refutatio*. Furthermore, the *Alogi* are not mentioned in Pseudo-Tertullian’s work against the heresies. They do not appear on Tertullian’s radar, Origen knows nothing about them, and no mention of them is made by Eusebius. Certainly a group with these anti-Johannine convictions would have caught the attention of these Fathers, yet no one prior to Epiphanius mentions anything about these *Alogi*.

Not only is there general silence about these *Alogi* from other early witnesses, Epiphanius himself is not forthcoming in detailing any of their defining features. As a result, there is a healthy level of confusion surrounding the provenance of the

Alogi, with scholarly speculations ranging from Asia Minor to Rome.⁸ The dates that scholars attach to the *Alogi* are equally unstable. Some maintain that they emerged prior to Irenaeus,⁹ while others argue that Hippolytus railed against them in a work that was lost in the unfolding of time.¹⁰ Some believe the *Alogi* were active from the time of Origen to the era of Dionysius of Alexandria.¹¹ Despite the possibility of a century-long window of *Alogi* activity, it remains a period of time in which no Church Father mentions them by name.

What about their theological tenets? On this account the *Alogi* are many things to many people. For J. N. Sanders and C. K. Barrett the *Alogi* opposed the Gospel of John because it was the preferred Gospel of the Gnostics.¹² Eduard Schwartz and Hans von Campenhausen held that the *Alogi* disliked the Montanist use of John.¹³ Ernst Haenchen believed they were scared of *both* Gnosticism *and* Montanism.¹⁴ Robert Grant concurred, and added the Quartodecimans to the list of John-loving heretics that made the *Alogi* take up arms.¹⁵ For Walter Bauer, the orthodox-minded *Alogi* simply detected “a spirit of heresy” in the Johannine literature that could not be reconciled with the ecclesiastical attitude in Rome.¹⁶ Nevertheless, despite all the confusion and conflicting views surrounding the dates, provenance and theological tenets of these so-called *Alogi*, one common point has

⁸ Rome: see Dom John Chapman, *John the Presbyter and the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), 53-4 n. 1; Sanders, 35. Asia Minor: see von Campenhausen, *Formation*, 238. See also Fr. Vincent Rose, “Question Johannine: Les Aloges Asiates et les Aloges Romains,” *Revue Biblique* 6 (1897): 516-34.

⁹ Vincent Henry Stanton, *The Gospels as Historical Documents* 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903), Vol. I, 200; Robert M. Grant, “The Origin of the Fourth Gospel” *JBL* 69 (1950), 307; Campenhausen, *Formation*, 242 n. 184.

¹⁰ See Bludau, 165.

¹¹ See E. Schwartz, “Über den Tod der Söhne Zebedaei. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Johannesevangeliums,” *Abhandlungen d. Göttinger Gesellschaft der Wiss. N.F.* VII, 5 (1904), 44-53; also the Ph.D. dissertation of J. D. Smith Jr., “Gaius and the Controversy over the Johannine Literature” (Ph.D. Diss., Yale University, 1979), 195-6.

¹² Sanders, 110; Charles K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 1978), 66-84.

¹³ Campenhausen, *Formation*, 242; Schwartz, “Über den Tod,” 44-53.

¹⁴ Haenchen, 23-4.

¹⁵ Grant, “Fourth Gospel”, 108-10.

¹⁶ Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 208.

been repeatedly proffered by scholars throughout the twentieth century: the *Alogi* represent a widespread ecclesiastical movement against the Johannine corpus.

The most important question surrounds the constituents of this group. Which members of the early church promulgated these anti-Johannine sentiments? Epiphanius refrains from naming names. In addition to the general notice that they rejected the Johannine Gospel and Apocalypse and attributed both to the heretic Cerinthus, the only identifying information that he provides are two criticisms from this group against the Fourth Gospel and three against the Apocalypse. In response to these criticisms Epiphanius attempts his own counter-assurances of Johannine veracity and integrity. As a result of the limited information Epiphanius provides, questions have persisted throughout history regarding the exact nature of this heretical group.

Was this group so anomalous that it went entirely undetected by the other early Church Fathers, or was this group so marginalized that it only caught the attention of Epiphanius? Where did Epiphanius derive his information for this heresy that he named the *Alogi*? These questions persisted until the end of the nineteenth century when a discovery was made that would breathe new life into the problem of the identity of the *Alogi*. This recent addition to the pool of evidence came by way of two Syrian sources that were written nearly a millennium after the time that these *Alogi* supposedly existed. In their writings, Dionysius bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu note that a certain “Gaius” held similar anti-Johannine views to the *Alogi*. As a result of this “new” evidence, a relatively obscure Roman church figure, Gaius of Rome, has emerged as the leader and possibly the sole constituent of this heretical group. Although this identification is widely accepted throughout modern scholarship,¹⁷ I believe that it is the mistaken result of questionable methodology and a mishandling of the evidence.

The Argument of This Thesis

As I shall demonstrate throughout the present work, in order to sustain the view that the *Alogi* and Gaius of Rome represented a significant movement in the early church, it is necessary to cobble together disparate pieces of evidence spanning

¹⁷ See Chapter 2.

over a millennium while presuming the content of works that are either lost or which may have never existed. Most importantly, it requires a recalibration of the story told by the earliest evidence in light of statements recorded for the first time centuries after the *Alogi*. To be sure, the ecclesiastical figure Gaius of Rome as one of the *Alogi* makes for a fascinating and compelling story of how the early church once tried to dispose of the Johannine literature. However, rather than representing a coordinated ecclesiastical effort to eradicate the Johannine corpus, a close examination of the evidence actually suggests that these *Alogi* never existed. When careful consideration is given to the testimony of Epiphanius and other early witnesses, it is evident that the heresy known as the *Alogi* is actually an amalgamation of various testimonies that Epiphanius conflates under a single rubric. It is his attempt to address a variety of issues in a single account.

The purpose of this thesis is to carefully examine Epiphanius' testimony of the *Alogi* as well as the later Syrian evidence, with specific attention paid to the sources for each. Because the later Syrian evidence provides information that is not explicitly found in the earlier testimonies, it has become fashionable to interpret the latter in light of the former; however, this reverses the proper methodology of the historian. Instead of giving priority to the earliest evidence, the later evidence has become the interpretative key; however, the resulting conclusion raises more questions than it answers.

In contrast, this thesis gives precedence to the earliest evidence and examines the later sources in light of these witnesses, not the other way around. The result of this study demonstrates that the historical existence of the *Alogi* is unfounded; rather, the evidence points to the fact that Epiphanius has constructed this heresy from a variety of sources, each of which makes some mention of the Gospel or Apocalypse of John. They are like pieces of a puzzle, each of which adds to the picture Epiphanius paints; however none of them fully reflect the way Epiphanius describes the *Alogi*. Therefore, the evidence does not support the notion that an ecclesiastical group (or person) actively sought to eradicate the Johannine literature from the early church. Rather, it suggests that the group known as the *Alogi* is a fictive construction on the part of Epiphanius. The evidence also demonstrates that Gaius has been wrongly accused of being a "heretic" that spearheaded an anti-Johannine campaign.

This work will proceed in three sections. In the first section, *The Inflation and Deflation of the Alogi*, I survey the most notable contributions of scholarship to

this topic, beginning with the discovery of “new” evidence that would change scholarly perceptions throughout the twentieth century regarding the role of the Johannine literature in the early church. At its core, the inflation of the importance of the *Alogi* is based on the assumption that Epiphanius borrowed heavily from a lost work of Hippolytus. However, I demonstrate in the latter part of this section that the evidence does not support this position. Rather, a careful look at the way Epiphanius describes the *Alogi* and his general heresiological methodology demonstrates that this group is one of a number of abstract heresies in the *Panarion*.

In the second section I examine the *Conflation of Sources in Epiphanius’ Account of the Alogi*. The hypothesis that Epiphanius has constructed this account of the *Alogi* is verified when his testimony is examined alongside the testimonies of earlier Church Fathers, primarily Papias, Irenaeus, Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria and Eusebius. A close look at the relationship between Epiphanius and these sources demonstrates that he has amalgamated aspects from each of these sources and used them as “building blocks” for his account.

In the third and final section, *The Obfuscation and Clarification of the Alogi*, I examine the later Syrian evidence in light of the earlier evidence considered in Section II. It is generally taken for granted that the testimonies of Dionysius bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu are reliable witnesses to the ecclesiastical sentiments in Rome during the late second and early third centuries; however, I demonstrate that there is a strong degree of volatility and inaccuracy to these accounts such that they only obfuscate the picture. After carefully examining these sources in light of the earliest testimonies and their own historical milieu, I provide clarification to the ways in which these later writers have misunderstood and misrepresented the history of the church that came centuries before them.

As indicated in the following chapter, the *Alogi* have been the subject of interest for many scholars; however, to date there has not been a full-length study devoted to this heretical group. This is particularly odd, considering that these “heretics” continue to be the key ingredient of the “Johannine Controversy”. In order to establish whether or not the early church *did* reject the Johannine writings, it is necessary to give proper attention to the only group known to have held such views. As I demonstrate throughout this work, the evidence points to the fact that the *Alogi* are not an historical group, but a fabricated heretical construct. This raises some very important questions for scholars who continue to uphold the view that for

nearly two centuries those with power and influence in the church refused to accept the Johannine writings.

SECTION I

The Inflation and Deflation of the Alogi

The task of this first section is to examine the rise in influence of the *Alogi* as representative of the early church's attitude towards the Johannine literature and to question whether or not this view is sustainable. The inflation of the *Alogi* is clearly visible in the following summary of research over the past century, which has gone from seeing this heresy as a relatively obscure sect to an influential and active group within the early Church that was at the epicentre of the "Johannine Controversy".

The consensus within modern scholarship is that Epiphanius derived his knowledge of the *Alogi* from an earlier work of Hippolytus that has been lost in the unfolding of time. Support for this view is not based on any evidence from Hippolytus directly; rather it is an eclectic consortium of evidence ranging from a title of an unknown work that was etched on the back of a mutilated statue, the testimonies of two Syrian writers that came centuries after Hippolytus, and a theory by a nineteenth century scholar, who argued that Epiphanius likely derived much of his information for the *Panarion* from a lost heresiological work of Hippolytus. There are, however, serious questions regarding whether these pieces of evidence support the conclusion that Epiphanius derived his information from Hippolytus.

There is no evidence in any of the extant Hippolytan writings that he ever knew of the *Alogi* or that he wrote against anyone having such views; also, no one else from the second or third centuries knows anything about them by name. The reason why the *Alogi* failed to register with any other early Church Fathers has largely been overlooked or unrecognized. Epiphanius' testimony reveals the fact that he has constructed this heretical sect from a variety of sources. Thus, the second part of this section explores the evidence for Epiphanius' creation of this heresy.

The *Alogi* is not the only abstract heresy in the *Panarion*; in fact there are a number of others that appear to be a reflection of Epiphanius' creative and rhetorical abilities rather than historically verifiable groups.¹⁸ Thus, rather than representing widespread ecclesiastical sentiments against the Johannine literature, this section will conclude by realigning the present examination of the *Alogi* in Epiphanius' own

¹⁸ The notion of an "abstract heresy" is explained more fully in Chapter 2.

terms, taking into consideration how he conceives of what it means to be “heretical”. This, in turn, serves to deflate the role and historical significance of this so-called heresy.

CHAPTER ONE

Review of the Literature Concerning the Alogi

The end of the nineteenth century was witness to the start of a small revolution that would bear significant impact on scholarly studies of Epiphanius' *Alogi*, the perceived attitude of the early church towards the Gospel and Apocalypse of John in the late second and early third centuries, and an otherwise relatively inconsequential figure of the early church. The key that began to unlock this complex mystery came from an unlikely source: the writings of a Syrian exegete who lived nearly a millennium after the time of the *Alogi*. With the addition of this later evidence, scholarly estimations of the *Alogi* shifted from viewing this heresy as an obscure and mysterious heretical sect to an influential faction within early Christianity that was at the heart of the "Johannine Controversy".

1.1 The New Evidence Concerning the *Alogi* and Gaius of Rome: From Gwynn to Robinson

John Gwynn and J. B. Lightfoot

In 1888 the Syriac scholar John Gwynn published some fragments of the *Commentary on the Apocalypse, Acts and Epistles* by the twelfth-century Jacobite bishop of Amid, Dionysius bar Salibi (d.1171).¹⁹ While bar Salibi's work makes no mention of the *Alogi*, it does highlight another enigmatic figure of the early church as a Johannine antagonist who, in a debate with Hippolytus, offered similar objections to the *Alogi* against the Apocalypse for reasons surrounding its compatibility with other Scripture. Bar Salibi identifies this person only as "Gaius", and since the only known figure from this era of church history who went by this name was a certain "Gaius of Rome", the two quickly became identified. Eventually, Gaius would also be considered to be the sole constituent of the *Alogi*.

¹⁹ John Gwynn, "Hippolytus and his 'Heads against Caius,'" *Hermathena*. A Series of Papers on Literature, Science and Philosophy, by Members of Trinity College, Dublin. Vol. 6 (1888), 397-418. Bar Salibi's work on the Apocalypse is published in its entirety by Sedlacek, I. (ed.) *Dionysius Bar Salibi. In Apocalypsim, Actus et Epistulas catholicas*. CSCO 60. Scriptores Syri. Versio. Series Secunda. Tomus CI. Romae: Excudebat Karolus de Luigi, 1910. Hereafter referred to as *Comm. Apoc.*

Prior to Gwynn's discovery, it may be said that just as little was known about Gaius of Rome as was known of the *Alogi*. After all, shortly prior to Gwynn's publication that highlighted the bar Salibi commentary, J. B. Lightfoot went so far as to question the historical existence of Gaius, hypothesizing that he was nothing more than a fictitious character of Hippolytus' imagination invented for dramatic purposes in his polemic against the Montanists – perhaps even a double of Hippolytus himself.²⁰ Lightfoot based this hypothesis on the fact that the sole early witness of Gaius is provided by Eusebius (*HE* 2.25.6-7; 3.28.1-2; 3.31.4; 6.20.3), who praises Gaius' written work against the teachings of the Montanist Proclus. Given that Eusebius is only aware of this Gaius through what must have been an anonymous copy of the anti-Montanist work entitled *Dialogue with Proclus*, Lightfoot argued that Eusebius incorrectly assumed Gaius was its author due to the fact that he was presented as the main protagonist. In light of the available evidence, Lightfoot concluded it is more likely that this work, as with many of the particulars of Gaius, should be predicated to Hippolytus – thus eliminating Gaius as an historical figure.

Gwynn's discovery not only disproved Lightfoot's hypothesis by securing the historical existence of Gaius of Rome as distinct from Hippolytus, it also added to the legacy of Gaius by providing new information that demonstrated he had refused to accept the Apocalypse as canonical.²¹ Ironically, Gaius, who was once venerated by Eusebius as an "ecclesiastical man" (ἐκκλησιαστικὸς ἀνὴρ, *HE* 2.25.6) and a "very learned man" (λογιωτάτου ἀνδρός, *HE* 6.20.3) of good – if not prominent – standing within the early church, was later cast as a "heretic" by Dionysius bar Salibi.²²

In his commentary, bar Salibi records a debate between Gaius and Hippolytus, and he cites five of Gaius' objections against some perceived level of incompatibility of the Apocalypse with other scripture, after which he also provides

²⁰ J.B. Lightfoot, "Caius or Hippolytus?" *Journal of Philology* I, no. 1 (1868): 98-112. See also eadem, *The Apostolic Fathers: Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp*. 2 parts in 5 vols. (London: Macmillan & Co., 1890), i, 2, 377ff. (Hereafter *AF*).

²¹ In response to Gwynn's discovery Lightfoot conceded the falsity of his hypothesis, but did not entirely let go of his position. "Gaius therefore is alive once more, though he seemed to me to be dead. But, whether this is really Gaius the Roman presbyter or another, may perhaps still be an open question." Lightfoot, *AF* i, 2, 388.

²² Dionysius bar Salibi refers to "*Caius haereticus*" in the first and fifth objections raised by Gaius against the Apocalypse of John. See Gwynn, 399, 402; *Comm. Apoc.* 8, 19. In contrast, Photius goes so far as to suggest that Gaius was a presbyter of the church in Rome and was ordained "bishop of the Gentiles" (*Bibl.* 48).

Hippolytus' rebuttals. Gwynn noticed that the fourth objection of Gaius to the eschatological teachings of the Apocalypse (Rev. 9:15), concerning whether the angels mentioned are to be released to slay the third of mankind, was analogous to one of the arguments lodged by the *Alogi* in Epiphanius' *Panarion* (*Haer.* 51.34.2-8).²³ In addition, the respective responses to this objection by Epiphanius and Hippolytus bore similarities, particularly in the identical appeal to Deut. 32:7-9 for scriptural justification and clarification of the intended meaning of the text in Revelation.²⁴ The implication was clear: there must be some connection between the source(s) of bar Salibi's commentary and Epiphanius' account of the *Alogi*. It would seem that either Epiphanius and bar Salibi were dependent upon the same work of Hippolytus, or perhaps bar Salibi simply modified the testimony of Epiphanius and provided the missing information that showed the *Alogi* was Gaius of Rome. Gwynn was drawn to the former and concluded that the Hippolytan work entitled *Heads Against Gaius*, recorded in the *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu (c. 1300), was the common source of both.²⁵

Yet a full connection between Gaius and the *Alogi* was missing one crucial element: the bar Salibi commentary in Gwynn's hands only recorded Gaius' rejection of the Apocalypse, whereas the *Alogi* rejected the Gospel of John as well. In fact, Gwynn argued that Gaius could *not* be identified with the *Alogi* because it appears he was receptive of the Gospel of John. In Hippolytus' replies to the first and final charges of Gaius against the Apocalypse, Hippolytus cites the Gospel of John (11:10, 12:35-36; 14:30), "evidently as an authority admitted by his opponent."²⁶ Furthermore, Gwynn noted that none of the criticisms of Gaius recorded by bar Salibi demonstrate that he "went to such lengths in his condemnation of the Apocalypse as to assign it to Cerinthus."²⁷ Eusebius informs us that Gaius, in his *Dialogue with Proclus*, opposed the carnal chiliasm of Cerinthus expressed in an apocalyptic work that Cerinthus falsified under the name of a "great apostle" (*HE* 3.28.1-2). Is this a reference to John's Apocalypse? For Gwynn, if Gaius had

²³ Gwynn, 402, 406-7; *Comm. Apoc.*, 10.

²⁴ Gwynn, 406-7. Cf. *Haer.* 51.34.5-7; *Comm. Apoc.* 10.

²⁵ Hippolytus' *Heads Against Gaius* was, according to Gwynn, a distinct work from another work listed in the *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu entitled, *Defense of the Gospel and Apocalypse according to John*. *Ibid.*, 404-5.

²⁶ Gwynn, 406; *Comm. Apoc.* 8, 19.

²⁷ Gwynn, 408-9.

actually gone so far as to attribute the Johannine Apocalypse to Cerinthus surely Hippolytus and bar Salibi would have included and refuted such a position. Thus the absence of any such reference led Gwynn to conclude that Gaius could not have attributed the Johannine Apocalypse to Cerinthus, as had the *Alogi* (*Haer.* 51.3.6).²⁸

J. Rendell Harris

Within a decade of Gwynn's publication, the hypothesis that Gaius only rejected the Apocalypse of John would be superseded. In 1895 J. Rendell Harris delivered a lecture before the *Society of Historical Theology* in which he called attention to a Latin translation by Dudley Loftus of an additional commentary by Dionysius bar Salibi on the Gospels that indicates Gaius rejected the Gospel of John as well.²⁹ In this text, one of Gaius' objections to the Fourth Gospel recorded in bar Salibi's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*³⁰ is substantively the same as the first objection of the *Alogi* regarding the events surrounding the baptism of Jesus (*Haer.* 51.17.11-51.18.1).³¹ There were, however, some crucial textual issues surrounding Harris' discovery. When Harris compared Loftus' Latin translation with two Syriac manuscripts located in the British Museum (now held in the British Library), the

²⁸ Ibid., 405-6. Shortly after Gwynn's publication, Adolf von Harnack also argued that Gaius did not reject John or ascribe it to Cerinthus, only that he may have utilized elements of the *Alogi*'s arguments against Revelation. Adolf von Harnack, *Das Neue Testament um das Jahr 200* (Freiburg: J.C.B. Mohr, 1889), 63ff.

²⁹ Harris' paper was published a year later in J. Rendel Harris, "Presbyter Gaius and the Fourth Gospel," in *Hermas in Arcadia and other Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896), 43-59. See Harris (48) for his record of a portion of Loftus' translation, which is preserved in the Bodleian Library, *Fell MSS.* 6 and 7, translated from the Syriac MS listed in the Manuscripts Department of Trinity College Library, Dublin as: TCD MS 1512 fol. Chart., s.xii. Dionysius (Jacob) Barsalibi; *Commentarius in Quator Evangelia. Written by Matthew, son of John, for his nephew Matthew, son of Bakhittitujar, A. Gr. 1509; AD 1198.* Loftus' translation opens with the words, "Gaius haereticus reprehendat Johannem quia non concors fuit cum sociis..."

³⁰ The historical title of this work by Dionysius bar Salibi is *Commentary on the Four Gospels*. The designation *Commentary on the Gospel of John* is used in this thesis for the sake of specificity, denoting that portion of bar Salibi's commentary on the Fourth Gospel, not in reference to a work by this title. The Synoptic portions of this commentary have been translated into Latin, however his commentary on the Gospel of John unfortunately remains absent from a Latinized critical edition. There is a French summary and German introduction to bar Salibi's comments on the Gospel of John in which the Syriac text is provided: R. Lejoly (ed.), *Dionysii bar Salibi Enarratio in Ioannem* (Dison: Éditions Concile, 1975).

³¹ Harris, 54.

name “Gaius” was missing from the text of both.³² However, Harris argued that the parallels in form between bar Salibi’s *Commentary on the Gospel of John* and Gwynn’s discovery of bar Salibi’s *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, in which Gaius is clearly indicated, suggest “that we need have no hesitation in saying that if the name of Gaius was wanting in the first copy, it has been rightly suggested by later readers.”³³

Harris argued that it should have been clear from the beginning that Gaius attacked the Gospel of John as well as the Apocalypse given the evidence from the *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu, which records a Hippolytan work entitled *Heads against Gaius* followed by a work entitled *Defense of the Apocalypse and Gospel of John*. Harris compared these titles with one found on the back of the plinth of a statue of Hippolytus in the Vatican, ὑπὲρ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως. For Harris, the bar Salibi commentaries provided the missing link between the statue and Ebed-Jesu’s *Catalogue*, and thus he concluded that there was a singular work of Hippolytus in which the *Heads against Gaius* was originally connected with the work mentioned on the plinth of Hippolytus’ statue, thus giving one work that he lists as Κεφάλαια κατὰ Γαΐου ὑπὲρ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως.³⁴

Harris took a step further than Gwynn in devoting a significant portion of his essay to demonstrating the connections between the arguments lodged by Gaius and those of Epiphanius’ *Alogi* in *Haer.* 51. The noticeable parallels between the positions of Gaius recorded in the writings of bar Salibi and Epiphanius’ *Alogi*, “is so striking that it betrays a common origin, and this must be the work of Hippolytus, which has been rehandled by Epiphanius, and which appears, perhaps in abbreviated

³² Codd. Add. 7184 and 12,143. Whereas Codd. Add. 7184 begins this section with “A certain heretic had accused John...” above which the name “Gaius” is added by a later hand, any mention of this name is wholly wanting in MS. Add. 12,143.

³³ Harris, 50. It should also be noted that another Syriac MS of bar Salibi’s *Commentary on the Four Gospels*, which does contain Gaius’ name was subsequently located. This MS was never published, but is located in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, France and listed as Syriac MS, *Cod. Paris. syr.* 67, fol. 270, r^o, col. 2. See J. D. Smith Jr. “Gaius and the Controversy over the Johannine Literature” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1979), 37, n. 1; 201, n. 2. Smith provides an English translation of this MS in Appendix E, 591.

³⁴ Harris, 46.

form, in the extracts of Bar-Salibi.”³⁵ Although Harris did argue that the criticisms of the Johannine writings recorded in bar Salibi are uncannily similar with those recorded in Epiphanius (*Haer.* 51), he did not go so far as to identify Epiphanius’ *Alogi* as Gaius of Rome alone. Nevertheless, he laid the foundation for future scholars to take this further step of identifying the two as a singular entity.

T. H. Robinson

The final piece of “new” evidence from the bar Salibi commentaries on the Johannine literature came at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1906, T. H. Robinson published an article in which he argued that Hippolytus was the author of the *Muratorian Canon*.³⁶ This conclusion was based on Robinson’s assumption that Epiphanius was wholly reliant upon a *singular* work of Hippolytus (*Heads against Gaius/Defense*), as Harris had suggested. Robinson also argued that the defense of the Gospel of John recorded in the *Muratorian Canon* is too similar to the response of Hippolytus against Gaius to deny that the *Muratorian Canon* is a product of Hippolytus as well.³⁷ To substantiate his conclusion, Robinson published the introduction to bar Salibi’s *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, which had been missing from Gwynn’s copy of the same work.³⁸ In this recovered portion of bar Salibi’s commentary one finds his historical introduction to the commentary in which Gaius is portrayed as clearly rejecting *both* the Gospel and Apocalypse of John, and attributing both to Cerinthus.³⁹ As to where bar Salibi got this information, Robinson concluded that the “law of parsimony of causes” necessitates that all of bar Salibi’s quotations must have come directly from Hippolytus’ *Defense of the Apocalypse and Gospel of John*.⁴⁰

³⁵ Ibid., 53.

³⁶ T.H. Robinson, “The Authorship of the Muratorian Canon,” *The Expositor* 7, 1 (1906): 481-495.

³⁷ Ibid., 494-5.

³⁸ See Gwynn, 410.

³⁹ Robinson (487) translated the preface to bar Salibi’s work, which includes this statement: “Hippolytus of Rome states that a man named Gaius had appeared, who said that neither the Gospel nor yet the Revelation was John’s; but that they were the work of Cerinthus the heretic.”

⁴⁰ Ibid., 491.

1.2 The Formation of a Consensus: From Schwartz to Smith

Eduard Schwartz

In a series of three articles written at the beginning of the twentieth century, Eduard Schwartz provided fresh insights into the discussion of Gaius of Rome and the opposition to the Johannine writings.⁴¹ In the first two articles Schwartz identified the unnamed opponents of the Gospel of John mentioned by Irenaeus (*AH* 3.11.9) with Epiphanius' *Alogi* (*Haer.* 51).⁴² Irenaeus' use of the plural "others" (*Alii*), along with Epiphanius' *Alogi*, does not necessitate that this opposition to the Johannine writings indicated a multiplication of opponents. Rather, Schwartz argued the use of the plural was a common stylistic device used in the polemical genre in which both Irenaeus and Epiphanius wrote. Schwartz employed this argument to secure his conclusion that there is "not the least doubt" that the opposition to the Gospel and Apocalypse of John was limited to one person: Gaius of Rome.⁴³

Hippolytus, a pupil of Irenaeus, was the intermediary to Epiphanius and the source for his knowledge of the opposition to the Johannine writings. Moreover, Schwartz argued that because Irenaeus was implicitly referring to Gaius as the true identity of his anonymous group of Johannine opponents, Eusebius' testimony of the date of Gaius' *Dialogue* during the reign of Zephyrinus (199-217 A.D.; cf. *HE* 2.25.6; 6.20.3) must have been erroneous.⁴⁴ In his opinion, around 160 A.D. one could still refuse the Fourth Gospel and avoid excommunication; thus Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus* must have been written around this time. This presents the unlikely scenario that Hippolytus chose to respond to the arguments of Gaius some half century later. Nevertheless, Schwartz adopted this position over the alternative,

⁴¹ Eduard Schwartz, "Über den Tod der Söhne Zebedaei: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Johannesevangeliums," *Abhandlungen d. Göttinger Gesellschaft der Wiss., N.F.* VII, 5 (1904): 3-53; "Noch einmal der Tod der Söhne Zebedaei," *ZNW*, 11 (1910): 89-104; "Johannes und Kerinthos," *ZNW* 15 (1914): 210-219. The first and third articles are located in Eduard Schwartz, *Gesammelte Schriften*, V (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1963), 48-123 and 170-182 respectively. Pagination references correspond to the original publications.

⁴² Schwartz, "Über den Tod," 30.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 40, 44; Schwartz, "Noch einmal," 99.

⁴⁴ Schwartz, "Über den Tod," 40ff.

which must validate Eusebius' dating and thus abandon the notion that Gaius was the true author of the *Dialogue*.

Despite the fact that Schwartz was unaware of Harris' discovery of bar Salibi's commentary on the Gospel of John, his analysis of the Syriac fragments of bar Salibi's commentary on Revelation led him to the conclusion that there is no doubt Gaius rejected the Gospel of John as well.⁴⁵ This is based largely on the similarity in style between the objections raised by the *Alogi* in Epiphanius and Gaius in the commentary of bar Salibi.⁴⁶ Schwartz argued that Eusebius did not mention Gaius' rejection of the Gospel of John due to the fact that he had an incomplete copy of the *Dialogue* in which this criticism was deleted.⁴⁷

Finally, Schwartz found further evidence of orthodox backlash against Gaius in the writings of Origen and Eusebius. In his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Origen treats the arguments of discrepancies in the chronology of Christ's ministry recorded in the Gospel of John as compared to that found in the Synoptics (*Comm. Jo.* 10). Schwartz argued that since Gaius constituted the *Alogi*, Origen's response to this line of argument is his own polemic against Gaius. In addition, Schwartz argued that it is not unlikely that Eusebius' discussion of the order in which the Gospels were written (*HE* 3.24) was directed at the criticisms that originated from Gaius, although Eusebius was not aware that Gaius was at the core of this position.⁴⁸

In his third article, however, Schwartz modified and retracted some of his previous positions.⁴⁹ Most notably, Schwartz no longer held that Gaius rejected the Gospel of John, nor did he uphold his earlier view that Gaius was to be identified with the *Alogi*. Gaius, independent of this association, based his attacks on the Johannine Apocalypse from a previous second-century, anti-Montanist work that rejected both the Gospel and Apocalypse of John. The existence of such a work, however, is pure conjecture. Nevertheless, Schwartz maintained that Gaius only

⁴⁵ Ibid., 36. Schwartz translated the Syriac fragments of bar Salibi's commentary on Revelation back into Greek, as it is the only "scientific" and "permissible" language for this type of analysis.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 36ff.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 42.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 44-5.

⁴⁹ Schwartz, "Johannes und Kerinthos," 210-19.

rejected the Johannine Apocalypse, which he argued was not an uncommon position in the early third century. Likewise, Epiphanius utilized the same hypothetical work in his description of the *Alogi*, who wanted to take away the apostolic foundation for the Montanist doctrine of the Paraclete and thus ascribed Revelation to Cerinthus. The Gospel of John, guilty by authorial association, was therefore ascribed to Cerinthus as well.⁵⁰

As a result, Hippolytus no longer served as the intermediary between Gaius and Epiphanius. As with Gaius and Epiphanius, Hippolytus himself is indebted to this previous, hypothetical work, which, along with Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus*, served as a foundation for his two distinct treatises: the *Defense of the Gospel of John and Revelation* as well as the *Heads against Gaius*.⁵¹ Furthermore, Schwartz abandoned his previous dating of Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus* and adopted Eusebius' dating during the time of Zephyrinus.⁵² Finally, Schwartz argued that the *Alogi* existed independent of and prior to Gaius of Rome.

August Bludau

In 1925, August Bludau composed a comprehensive study focused squarely on the evidence to support the "Johannine Controversy".⁵³ Some of his conclusions fell in step with those of Schwartz and others, however his analysis also raised important questions regarding the way in which the evidence was being calibrated throughout scholarship.

Bludau agreed that Irenaeus' anonymous group in *AH* 3.11.9 must have been a group of anti-Montanists that rejected the Gospel of John, however there is nothing to suggest that the Apocalypse was also included.⁵⁴ This means that Irenaeus was not referring to the *Alogi*. Furthermore, he concluded that Gaius of Rome was to be

⁵⁰ Ibid., 213-4.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., 212.

⁵³ A. Bludau, *Die ersten Gegner der Johannesschriften*. Biblische Studien 22 (Freiburg: Herder and Co., 1925).

⁵⁴ Ibid., 39-40.

distinguished from the *Alogi* as well, particularly because there is nothing to indicate that these heretics were anti-Montanists.⁵⁵ Gaius did, however, appropriate the arguments of the *Alogi*, which preceded him, in his *Dialogue with Proclus*.⁵⁶ Also, Epiphanius clearly sees this heresy as more than a single individual, thus eliminating the possibility of Gaius being the only member of the *Alogi*.⁵⁷

As to the source(s) for Epiphanius' testimony, Bludau pointed to Hippolytus, primarily due to bar Salibi's testimony.⁵⁸ Because neither the *Alogi* or Gaius are mentioned in any of his extant works, Hippolytus must have composed two different apologetic works later in his life: one against the *Alogi* (*Apology*) and one against Gaius (*Heads against Gaius*). Whether or not these two works are related is unclear.⁵⁹ It is certain, though, that Epiphanius did not conceive of Gaius as the *Alogi*, thus he used Hippolytus' *Apology*, not the *Heads against Gaius*, as his source.

Walter Bauer

In 1934, Walter Bauer added a new dimension to the study of Gaius of Rome.⁶⁰ In his work, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, he did not give particular attention to the details surrounding the numerous dimensions of the study of the *Alogi* upon which previous scholars had focused. Rather, he was content to amalgamate previous scholarship into a tidy summary of Gaius and the *Alogi* that fit squarely within his overall purpose, which was to demonstrate that early Christianity was far more diverse and complex in nature than tradition is inclined to suggest.

Bauer argued that Gaius of Rome “vigorously” rejected the Fourth Gospel and is “closely connected” with Epiphanius' *Alogi*. Irenaeus was a witness of the perspective of this group around 175 A.D. (AH 3.11.9), even if Gaius was not a

⁵⁵ Ibid., 120.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 165.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 222-3.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 150ff.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 165; cf. 184-5.

⁶⁰ Walter Bauer, *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1934), ET, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, eds. Robert A. Kraft and Gerhard Krodel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971).

member of the *Alogi* at that time. The reason why Gaius was not condemned as a heretic at this point suggested to Bauer that it was permissible for a Roman Christian – and in this case an officeholder – to consider the Apocalypse and Gospel of John as forgeries of Cerinthus.⁶¹

He went on to argue that the reasons stated for Gaius' rejection of the Gospel of John – namely its contradictions with the Synoptics and Gaius' preference for the Synoptic portrayal of Jesus' earthly life – do not demonstrate the real cause for his rejection, which was a “spirit of heresy” that was irreconcilable with his Roman-ecclesiastical attitude. Bauer believed that Gaius personified the general mood of early orthodoxy in Rome towards the Fourth Gospel, which manifested its reticence towards this Gospel through silence and explicit rejection. Bauer argued that the association of the Gospel of John with Montanism and Gnosticism caused Gaius along with the *Alogi* and the orthodox community in Rome to reject it. In fact, “history is unable to name a single orthodox Roman for whom the Fourth Gospel had been of any significance” until Irenaeus defended its apostolicity without reservation.⁶²

J. N. Sanders

J. N. Sanders echoed much of the overall analysis of Walter Bauer in his work, *The Gospel of John in the Early Church*.⁶³ At the foundation of Sanders' argument was the notion that the Gospel of John originated in Alexandria and bore proto-gnostic elements that were intended to resonate with people inclined towards such religious speculation, but the Gospel was eventually exploited by Alexandrian and Valentinian gnostics such as Basilides, Ptolemy, Heracleon and Valentinus in the second century in order to validate the apostolic heritage of their teachings.⁶⁴ Gaius

⁶¹ Ibid., 207.

⁶² Ibid., 208.

⁶³ J.N. Sanders, *The Fourth Gospel in the Early Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943).

⁶⁴ Sanders later argued for a Syrian followed by an Ephesian origin of the Gospel of John in J.N. Sanders, *The Foundations of the Christian Faith* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1951), 161-2 and

and the conservative *Alogi* essentially conceded the validity of the Valentinian exegesis of the Gospel of John in their rejection of the Gospel and attribution of it to the “early Gnostic Cerinthus”. It was left to Irenaeus to demonstrate the legitimacy of the orthodox *kerygma* within the Gospel and its usefulness as a weapon against the Gnostics by means of superior exegesis.⁶⁵

As with Bauer, Sanders saw Rome as the center of orthodox reticence towards accepting the Gospel of John and Revelation. He emphasized the Gnostic affinity for the Gospel of John and believed that it was likely that either the Valentinians or Quartodecimans first introduced this Gospel to the Roman church. Sanders also found it significant that both Gaius and Irenaeus were connected with Rome, which had been visited by Valentinus and other Gnostics.⁶⁶ He argued that Rome was also the “headquarters of the *Alogi*”, and Gaius was a member of this group. Furthermore, the Johannine opponents mentioned by Irenaeus (*AH* 3.11.9) are to be understood as Epiphanius’ *Alogi*. This is evidenced by the fact that Irenaeus argued that John wrote the Gospel to correct the errors of Cerinthus (*AH* 3.11.1). Sanders did not focus on the intricate and complicated evidence surrounding the *Alogi* or the person of Gaius. He chose rather to emphasize the notion that the attitude of Gaius and the *Alogi* are symptomatic of a general reluctance within the Roman orthodox community to accept the Johannine writings as authoritative and canonical.

Robert M. Grant

In the middle of the twentieth century Robert M. Grant briefly discussed the role of Gaius and the *Alogi* in two articles on the role of the Fourth Gospel in the early church.⁶⁷ As with Bauer and Sanders, Grant emphasized the vital role that

eadem, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John*, ed. B. A. Mastin (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1969), respectively.

⁶⁵ Sanders, *Fourth Gospel*, 65-6, 85.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 32, 38.

⁶⁷ R.M. Grant, “The Fourth Gospel and the Church,” *HTR* 35, no. 2 (April 1942): 95-116; eadem, “The Origin of the Fourth Gospel,” *JBL* 69, no. 4 (December 1950): 305-322.

Gnosticism played in the Roman orthodox opposition to the Johannine writings, however Grant gave more attention to the position of Gaius as a primary antagonist.

According to Grant, the testimony of Irenaeus (*AH* 3.11.9) demonstrates that Eusebius wrongly dated Gaius during the reign of Zephyrinus.⁶⁸ The objections of Gaius are pre-Irenaeus and they demonstrate the “unenthusiasm” of an “influential” group in Rome towards the Gospel of John that “the Asiatics were beginning to put forward as apostolic.”⁶⁹ This Roman orthodox group, the *Alogi*, is to be identified with Gaius, who staunchly upheld the position of Roman orthodoxy and its triad of gospels against the Gospel of John and the threatening views of the Gnostics, Montanists and Quartodecimans with which it was associated.⁷⁰

In light of the commentaries of bar Salibi, Grant suggested that it is more likely that Gaius rejected the Gospel of John in the *Dialogue* and *Heads against Gaius* alike, and that Eusebius did not provide a full quotation.⁷¹ Furthermore, the testimony of Eusebius proves that Dionysius of Alexandria made use of Gaius’ *Dialogue* in his work *On the Promises* (*HE* 7.25.1-3). Grant argued that Cerinthus’ Christology does not agree with the chiliasm of the Johannine Apocalypse and that the theories of Gaius concerning the authenticity of the Gospel of John and the Apocalypse were “simply anti-Montanist propaganda”.⁷² Irenaeus, Hippolytus and the *Muratorian Canon* demonstrate the judgment that was to be pronounced on Gaius: “The church had spoken; Gaius’ defence of an outmoded orthodoxy was henceforth heretical.”⁷³

⁶⁸ Grant would later modify this position, noting that Gaius post-dated Irenaeus. See R.M. Grant, *Heresy and Criticism: The Search for Authenticity in Early Christian Literature*, (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 93.

⁶⁹ Grant, “Fourth Gospel,” 108, n. 77; eadem, “Origin,” 307.

⁷⁰ Grant, “Fourth Gospel,” 109; eadem, “Origin,” 307.

⁷¹ Grant, “Fourth Gospel,” 109, n. 85.

⁷² Grant, “Origin,” 310.

While it is unknown where the polemic against the Johannine writings arose, Hans von Campenhausen believed it probably originated in Asia Minor.⁷⁴ The reaction of the West was far less harsh than that seen in Asia Minor, with the exception of Gaius. But, according to Campenhausen, Gaius needs to be understood in light of his larger context.

Campenhausen adhered to the Eusebian dating of Gaius during the time of Zephyrinus, and argued that Gaius' intentions indicate a motivation that extended beyond his opposition to the Montanists. Gaius "strove for a revision and reduction of the whole New Testament."⁷⁵ He not only attacked Hebrews and the Apocalypse of John, Gaius also sought to dismantle Irenaeus' four-fold Gospel canon in his attacks on the Gospel of John. Campenhausen held that Gaius was "a respected theologian" – even Eusebius expressed "no doubts about his orthodoxy" – and there is no reason to believe that he would have been the first spokesperson of Roman orthodoxy to attribute the Johannine writings to Cerinthus, even if the reasons for this particular attribution "can hardly be determined with certainty."⁷⁶ He also argued that Gaius was "a scholar" who was "unruffled in argument" and who based his case "more on objective and philological grounds than on tendentious whims."⁷⁷

For Campenhausen, Irenaeus did not know about Gaius at the time of composing his treatise *Against Heresies*, and thus is not to be considered a "relevant source".⁷⁸ Later, the response of Hippolytus to Gaius' criticisms came in a singular polemical treatise, and this was the foundation for Epiphanius' description of the *Alogi*, who had only one member: Gaius of Rome.⁷⁹

⁷³ Grant, "Fourth Gospel and the Church," 110.

⁷⁴ Hans von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*. Trans. L.A. Garrard. (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1972), 238.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 237.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 239, n. 161.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 239.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 240., n. 164.

The sustained progression towards the identification of Epiphanius' *Alogi* with Gaius of Rome culminated in 1979 in the Yale Ph.D. dissertation of Joseph Daniel Smith, Jr.⁸⁰ The scope of Smith's analysis is exhaustive. His conclusions, however, are little more than a repackaged collection of various scholars before him. It is essentially a regurgitation of Schwartz's original arguments, with an occasional twist. Nevertheless, his work is still largely considered to be authoritative up to the present time.⁸¹ As Smith's work represents the only full-scale study of Gaius of Rome and the *Alogi* up to the present time, and since it generally reflects the consensus view, I shall provide a more thorough summary of his work.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of Smith came in framing the historical situation of the early church by drawing on the testimonies of a number of early church fathers from the second century through the thirteenth century, the content of which Smith sees as indirectly corroborating the position that Gaius and the *Alogi* are one in the same. In particular, when deference is given to the twelfth-century testimony of Dionysius bar Salibi, then the earlier testimonies of Irenaeus, Dionysius of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius and others can be calibrated to suggest that Gaius stood alone in his opposition to the Gospel and Apocalypse of John and is the sole figure behind the enigmatic heretical "group" Epiphanius refers to as the *Alogi*. At present, Smith's unpublished dissertation remains the most thorough examination of the evidence concerning the *Alogi* and Gaius of Rome. There are, however, a number of key features within Smith's work that require specific consideration in order to test the validity of his conclusions.

First, Smith maintained that Irenaeus, in his defense of a four-fold gospel, was responding in part to the arguments of Gaius (*AH* 3.11.9).⁸² Here, Irenaeus mentions an anonymous group of Johannine opponents: "Others" (*Alii*) have set

⁷⁹ Ibid., 239, n. 163; 240, n. 164.

⁸⁰ Joseph Daniel Smith, Jr. "Gaius and the Controversy over the Johannine Literature" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1979).

⁸¹ See Culpepper, *John*, 121.

⁸² Smith, "Gaius," 141-68.

aside the gifts of the Spirit presented by John's Gospel and have thus "at once set aside both the Gospel and the prophetic spirit" (AH 3.11.9). The question of the identity of this group has received no shortage of attention. Smith maintains that it is Gaius of Rome and that Irenaeus did not specifically name him because Gaius was situated within the orthodox camp, not demonstrably "heretical" as were the Valentinians or Marcion whom Irenaeus mentions earlier in this passage.⁸³

Smith argued that because Irenaeus is attacking those who wish to impugn the Gospel of John as a result of its use by another (anonymous) group of individuals to validate their claims of the prophetic spirit, the context suggests these *Alii* were an anti-Montanist faction within the church that reacted sharply against the "extreme, exaggerated and fanatical claims to the possession of the Spirit and prophetic gifts by the Montanists."⁸⁴ However, Smith had a number of obstacles to overcome in his identification of Gaius with Irenaeus' *Alii*. First, more than once Eusebius dates Gaius during the time of Zephyrinus (199-217 A.D.; HE 2.25.6-7; 3.31.4); Irenaeus' *Against Heresies* is generally dated between 170-180 A.D. Either Eusebius was wrong in his dating of Gaius, or Irenaeus was somehow aware of Gaius' anti-Montanist, anti-Johannine stance well before Gaius wrote his *Dialogue with Proclus*. Smith argued for the latter, suggesting that Irenaeus must have known the oral tradition of Gaius before the compositions of the *Dialogue with Proclus*.⁸⁵ Second, what about the fact that Irenaeus' anonymous opponents are noted in the plural form? Here Smith followed Schwartz, who argued that Irenaeus' use of the plural *Alii* (AH 3.11.9), along with Epiphanius' *Alogi* (Haer. 51), does not necessitate that this opposition to the Johannine writings indicated a multiplication of opponents. Rather, the use of the rhetorical plural was a common stylistic device used in the polemical genre in which both Irenaeus and Epiphanius wrote.⁸⁶ Third, Irenaeus does not

⁸³ Ibid., 168. See also Stanton, 202; Schwartz, "Über den Tod," 3-53.

⁸⁴ Smith, "Gaius," 159. Smith is correct in noting that Irenaeus is *not* referring to a group of Montanists in this passage, as suggested by various nineteenth-century writers, including A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, eds. *Ante-Nice Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*. 5 Vols., 1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1868), 295f. See further the discussion in Bludau, 13-27 and Smith, "Gaius," 153ff.

⁸⁵ See the identical conclusion of R.M Grant, "Origin," 307.

⁸⁶ Smith, "Gaius," 223. See Schwartz, "Über den Tod," 40, 44; eadem, "Noch einmal," 99. Cf. Bludau, 222-3.

mention anywhere that this group rejected the Apocalypse of John. Irenaeus *could* have insinuated a rejection of the Johannine Apocalypse in the phrase, "...but set aside at once both the gospel and the *prophetic Spirit*" (cf. e.g. Rev. 19:10 and 22:6).⁸⁷ This would, of course, force "prophetic spirit" to have a double entendre: the Paraclete, which Irenaeus is clearly addressing in this section, and a cryptic reference to the Johannine Apocalypse. Despite the fact that Smith expressed some reluctance regarding the viability of associating "*spiritum propheticum*" with the Johannine Apocalypse,⁸⁸ he nevertheless saw fit to presume Irenaeus had intended this double meaning.⁸⁹

Smith also argued that Eusebius (*HE* 3.28.1-2) clearly indicates that Gaius rejected the Johannine Apocalypse and ascribed it to Cerinthus.⁹⁰ Eusebius included Gaius' testimony because of his own disdain for the book, which he describes as being questionable in its canonicity and authorship (cf. *HE* 3.24-25, 3.39.6).⁹¹ To corroborate this, Smith argues that Dionysius of Alexandria, whom Eusebius quotes immediately after Gaius' statements (*HE* 3.28.3-5; cf. 7.25.1-3), used Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus* as the source for his attack against yet another anonymous group that attributed the Johannine Apocalypse to Cerinthus.⁹² This group is likely to include, if not solely consist of Gaius.⁹³ Thus, both Eusebius and Dionysius of Alexandria understand that Gaius rejected Revelation in his *Dialogue* and apparently attributed it to Cerinthus.⁹⁴

Furthermore, Smith followed Schwartz's conclusion that it is likely Origen was responding indirectly to Gaius' arguments against the Gospel of John in his

⁸⁷ "...sed simil et Evangelium et propheticum repellunt Spiritum."

⁸⁸ "...it is questionable whether the text can sustain such an interpretation," Smith, "Gaius," 143, n. 3. Stanton (202) argued that it is "probable" that this group also opposed the Apocalypse.

⁸⁹ Smith, "Gaius," 168. Smith was preceded in this notion by B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1927), 438.

⁹⁰ Smith, "Gaius," 182. Smith follows the lead of Hans von Campenhausen (*Formation* 241, n. 181), who argued that "There can be no doubt that Gaius does here have the Revelation of John in mind," not a distinct Apocalyptic writing from Cerinthus' own hand. See also Bludau, 40-60; Gwynn, 398.

⁹¹ Smith, "Gaius," 191-2.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 184-190. See also Chapman, 57.

⁹³ Smith, "Gaius," 188.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 190.

Commentary on John (*Comm. Jo.* 10.1-3).⁹⁵ Thus Smith suggests that nearly every extant witness to *any* explicit or implicit anti-Johannine sentiments from the testimonies of Irenaeus (*ca.* 175 A.D.), Origen (*ca.* 225-230 A.D.), Dionysius of Alexandria (*ca.* 250-255 A.D.), Eusebius (*ca.* 324-325 A.D.) and Epiphanius (*ca.* 374-377 A.D.) implicate *Gaius alone* in his rejection of *both* the Gospel and Apocalypse of John.

The second conclusion of Smith that requires attention is that all the sources that speak of Gaius and/or the *Alogi* are entirely dependent upon Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus* or Hippolytus' *Defense of the Gospel of John and Revelation*, which he maintains is the same as the work *Heads against Gaius*.⁹⁶ The exception to this necessary dependence on the writings of Gaius or Hippolytus is, of course, Irenaeus. By limiting the presumed source(s) of all knowledge of the Johannine opposition to Gaius and/or Hippolytus, Smith was able to strategically limit the scope of possibilities for identifying who comprised this anti-Johannine faction. Inevitably this would point to Gaius of Rome.⁹⁷

This is a crucial premise for Smith's identification of Gaius as the *Alogi*, without which his entire thesis would likely disintegrate. That is if Hippolytus had, in fact, written *two* treatises, the identification of Gaius as the *Alogi* would be less likely, as Epiphanius could have utilized one of Hippolytus' treatises (*viz.* the *Defense of the Apocalypse and Gospel of John*) for his description of the *Alogi*, and Hippolytus could have articulated his polemic against Gaius in a separate treatise (*viz.* the *Heads against Gaius*), of which Epiphanius may have been unaware.⁹⁸ But, Smith relied on the fact that other scholars had presumed these two works as singular

⁹⁵ Ibid., 195-6. See also Schwartz, "Über den Tod," 44-5; cf. eadem, "Johannes und Kerinthos," 213-4.

⁹⁶ Smith, "Gaius," 264, 136f., 225-6. Lightfoot's Greek translation of the Syriac *Catalogue* reads as: κεφάλαια κατὰ Γαΐου καὶ ἀπολογίαν ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀποκαλύψεως καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰωάννου [sic. Ἰωάννου] τοῦ ἀποστόλου καὶ εὐαγγελιστοῦ. Lightfoot, *AF* i, 2, 350. See also J. S. Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana*, tomi tertii pars prima Romae (Rome: S. C. Propaganda Fide 1719-1728) III.1, 15.

⁹⁷ "If this conclusion stands the test, then all knowledge of an opposition to the Johannine writings ultimately goes back to Gaius himself or to his *Dialogue with Proclus*." Smith, "Gaius," 227.

⁹⁸ Smith, "Gaius," 223ff.

in nature as well.⁹⁹ He argues that possibility of two works is “hardly plausible”, because “The duplication would be entirely unnecessary.”¹⁰⁰

The final conclusion of Smith is that Gaius rejected both the Gospel and Apocalypse of John and therefore is the only member of Epiphanius’ *Alogi*.¹⁰¹ “*The name ‘Alogi’ is entirely a fictitious fabrication by Epiphanius himself and in no way does it represent an historical group. There is only one known so called ‘Alogi’ who rejected the Gospel of John and Revelation and denied that John the Disciple was the author, and he is the historical Gaius of Rome.*”¹⁰²

Smith emphatically denied that this means that Gaius is to be considered as a figure of disdain or reproach in the early church. Rather, he sought to “rehabilitate” Gaius as an early “orthodox and venerated ecclesiastical leader” of the church in Rome at the beginning of the third century. Gaius was a biblical critic and scholar, whose contributions greatly impacted the history of the canon, the history of biblical interpretation, the history of doctrine and the history of the institution of the church.¹⁰³ Smith also argued that Gaius’ rejection of the Johannine writings was “merely incidental” to his main focus, which was the growing Montanist presence in Rome. “Gaius was unequivocally on the side of orthodoxy and viewed his treatise against Montanism the *Dialogue with Proclus*, including the opposition to the Johannine writings, as being in the service of the church at Rome.”¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Lightfoot noted, “The *Heads Against Gaius* are mentioned in the list of Ebedjesu as a separate work. But they have every appearance of being extracts from that part of this apologetic work which relates to the Apocalypse” [viz. *Defense of the Apocalypse...*]. Lightfoot, *AF* i. 2, 395. See also Harris, 46f.; Carl Schmidt, “Exkurs I: Der Gnostiker Kerinth. Die Aloger,” in *Gespräche Jesu Mit Seinen Jüngern Nach Der Auferstehung* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1919), 447; Robinson, 491. In addition, Smith argues (366) that the structure of this singular work was comprised of three sections: a defense of the Gospel of John, a defense of Revelation, and a refutation against Cerinthus.

¹⁰⁰ Smith, “Gaius,” 226.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 427, 429.

¹⁰² Ibid., 427 (italics those of Smith); see also 137, 265-6. Smith’s conclusion had been repeatedly articulated by a number of previous scholars including Schwartz, “Über den Tod,” 40, 44; eadem, “Noch einmal,” 99; Pierre Ladeuze, “Caius de Rome, le seul Aloge connu,” in *Mélanges Godefroid Kurth* (Liege: Sonderabdruck, 1908), 49-60; Chapman, 53, n. 1; R.M. Grant, “Fourth Gospel,” 109; *ibid.*, “Origin,” 307.

¹⁰³ Smith, “Gaius,” 425-37.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 429. This citation is exactly as it appears in Smith’s work.

1.3 The Current Consensus of the *Alogi*, Gaius, and the Johannine Literature

For more than the thirty years, the majority of scholars have upheld the configuration of Smith as the most plausible reading of the very complex set of data that underlies any formulation of the *Alogi* and Gaius of Rome. Today the general consensus includes the following positions: (i) Gaius is to be identified in part or in total with Epiphanius' *Alogi*;¹⁰⁵ (ii) Gaius and the *Alogi* rejected both the Apocalypse and Gospel of John as non-apostolic;¹⁰⁶ (iii) Irenaeus was referring to some form of the anti-Montanist, anti-Johannine phenomenon of the *Alogi* (and Gaius) in his defense of the Gospel of John (*AH* 3.11.9);¹⁰⁷ (iv) the opposition to the Johannine writings by the *Alogi* and Gaius, who was an ecclesiastical leader, is indicative of the overall attitude of Roman orthodoxy towards a possibly "tainted" gospel;¹⁰⁸ (v) Epiphanius and Dionysius bar Salibi were both dependent on the same source for their information, which must have been a work of Hippolytus that is now lost;¹⁰⁹ (vi) and the more peripheral conclusion based largely on the works of Walter Bauer,

¹⁰⁵ E.g., *ibid.*, 427; Ladeuze, 50; D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, (Cambridge: W. B. Eerdmans, 1991), 28; Haenchen, 18ff.; R.M. Grant, *Heresy and Criticism*, 97; Frank Williams, trans., *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 28, n. 9. R.A. Culpepper agrees completely with the work of Smith, noting that, "Recent scholarship has therefore dismissed the Alogoi from the stage of history. We have no evidence for such a group. The figure of Gaius has emerged with greater clarity, however." Culpepper, *John*, 122. See also the apparatus in Karl Holl and Jürgen Dummer (eds.), *GCS 31,2 Epiphanius II: Panarion haer. 34-64* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1980), 251-2.

¹⁰⁶ E.g., Smith, "Gaius," 429; B. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin Development and Significance*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 104-105; R. E. Heine, "Role of the Gospel of John in the Montanist Controversy," *Second Century* 6 (1987), 14; Haenchen, 18, 23; Hengel, *Johannine Question*, 5; eadem, *Four Gospels*, 21; D.M. Smith, "The Problem of John and the Synoptics in Light of the Relation Between Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels," in *John and the Synoptics* ed. A. Denaux BETL 101 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 157.

¹⁰⁷ E.g., Smith, "Gaius," 168; Culpepper, *John*, 121; G.M. Hahneman, *The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 102; Haenchen, 23-4; Hengel, *Johannine Question*, 5; cf. eadem, *Four Gospels*, 12, 21; Campenhausen, 238-9, n. 159. Perhaps Smith too hastily concluded that, "All evidence of criticisms against the Gospel of John and Revelation, their rejection, and denial of apostolic authorship can be traced back to Gaius of Rome and to no other person or group." Smith, "Gaius," 427.

¹⁰⁸ E.g., Smith, "Gaius," 427; Culpepper, *John*, 121; Hengel, *Four Gospels*, 137-8; cf. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 207-8.

¹⁰⁹ E.g., Robinson, 489; Pierre de Labriolle, *Les Sources de l'Histoire du Montanisme* (Paris: Ernest Lerou, 1913), LXIX-LXXVI; Grant, "Fourth Gospel," 108-9; Campenhausen, *Formation*, 236-42; Smith, "Gaius," 196-204, 222-8; Haenchen, 23; Culpepper, *John*, 122. Cf. Aline Pourkier, who takes a more conservative approach to this question in *L'Hérésiologie Chez Épiphane de Salamine* *Christianisme Antique* 4 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1992), 105.

J. N. Sanders and R. M. Grant, although dismissed by Smith, that the orthodox anti-Johannine response of the *Alogi* and Gaius was linked to anti-Gnostic sentiments.¹¹⁰

The most crucial component to the formulation of the *Alogi* being identified with Gaius is the cache of extracts of the twelfth-century Syrian exegete, Dionysius bar Salibi. The value of the testimony of bar Salibi to the question of Gaius and the *Alogi* cannot be underestimated, for it has provided scholarship with the foundation for many of the tenets of the current consensus by linking the anti-Johannine objections of Gaius with those of the *Alogi*. And whereas a majority of scholars are apt to take these later testimonies as reliable, two recent works have raised serious questions regarding their reliability and their portrayal of the early ecclesiastical opposition to the Johannine literature.

1.4 The Recent Challenge to the Consensus

Allen Brent

The first work to devote substantial attention to questioning the veracity of the bar Salibi statements and the connection of Gaius and the *Alogi* came in the form of Allen Brent's recent work on Hippolytus.¹¹¹ In his analysis, Brent concludes that there is no reason to assume that bar Salibi was reliant upon a lost Hippolytan polemical work against Gaius. Rather, it is more likely that bar Salibi drew his information from a florilegium, thus rendering the supposed conflict between Gaius and Hippolytus a product of bar Salibi's editorializing. Brent points to a variety of eastern pseudepigrapha that used Hippolytus' name in the creation of a literary character engaged in various polemical dialogues.¹¹² Thus, Brent does not see bar

¹¹⁰ Sanders, *Fourth Gospel*, 65-6, 85; Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 107-109; R.M. Grant, "Fourth Gospel," 108ff. See also Stanton, 404f.; Haenchen, 23-4; Hengel, *Johannine Question*, 5ff.; Hahneman, 102; R. Brown, *The Epistles of John*, (New York: Doubleday, 1982), 113f.; J. J. Gunther, "Early Identifications of Authorship of the Johannine Writings," *JEH* 31 (1980), 427. The early perspective of Adolf von Harnack suggested that the argument of the *Alogi* for Cerinthian authorship of the Gospel of John demonstrates the fact that they considered the Gospel of John to be a gnostic document with a Docetic Christology, and that they were intently opposed to Gnosticism. See A. von Harnack, "Die Gwynn'schen Cajus-und Hippolytus-Fragmente," *TU* (1890), 121-123.

¹¹¹ A. Brent, *Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop*. *VCSupp* 31. Leiden: Brill, 1995.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 178.

Salibi's testimony as preserving a lost work of Hippolytus against Gaius, nor that such a dispute ever occurred.

Regarding the Hippolytan work, "Heads against Gaius", Brent, following the earlier view of P. Nautin, suggests that Ebed-Jesu simply deduced the existence of such a work from reading bar Salibi's *Commentary on the Apocalypse*.¹¹³ "Both external and internal considerations preclude it from being anything else than a general exegetical tradition dressed up pseudepigraphically under the cipher-names of 'Hippolytus' and 'Gaius'."¹¹⁴ As such, the work on the statue should not be read as an apology.

Ultimately, the original source for the criticisms that bar Salibi attributes to Gaius is Epiphanius. One of Brent's significant conclusions is that the *Alogi* was not an historical group;¹¹⁵ rather, he notes that Epiphanius "succeeded in uniting a disparate group of objectors and objections into a composite heresy called the "Ἀλογοί."¹¹⁶ According to Brent, Epiphanius created the *Alogi* by "grouping under this one term disparate groups of people not necessarily doctrinally united, such as the Montanists alone."¹¹⁷ Thus, rather than identifying Gaius as the only member of the *Alogi*, Brent argues that bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu are dependent upon the development of a tradition that has its roots ultimately in the testimony of Epiphanius, not Hippolytus.

Brent's conclusion, if correct, has significant bearing on the question of the history and significance of the *Alogi*. However, given that the focus of his work was primarily on questions surrounding the Hippolytan corpus, not directly on the *Alogi*,

¹¹³ Ibid., 170-4. Cf. P. Nautin. *Le dossier d'Hippolyte et de Méliton dans les florilèges dogmatiques et chez les historiens modernes*. Patristica I. (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1953), 146.

¹¹⁴ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 184.

¹¹⁵ Prior to Brent, Campenhausen (242) notes this possibility, noting briefly that Epiphanius "makes up some tale about a formal sect of anti-Johannists." He nevertheless continues to maintain that Gaius was still one of the members of this group.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 173.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 140.

he stops short of developing which sources Epiphanius may have used.¹¹⁸ However, another recent challenger to the consensus view has begun this important task.

Charles E. Hill

Recently, Charles E. Hill¹¹⁹ has offered tentative support to the arguments of Brent concerning the *Alogi*. He suggests, “If Brent is correct, the entire edifice of opposition to the Fourth Gospel based around Gaius of Rome completely implodes, leaving scarcely a trace. But is he correct?”¹²⁰ In support of Brent’s theory, Hill develops some very important avenues to discern the sources that Epiphanius used in the creation of this sect. First, there is no doubt that Irenaeus influenced Epiphanius’ testimony. Hill is right in pointing to the notice of Irenaeus (*AH* 3.11.9) as a foundational source of Epiphanius’ testimony. Epiphanius (*Haer.* 51.23.3-4) also shows reliance upon Irenaeus’ comments on the Valentinians’ view that their number of celestial Aeons corresponds to the age of Jesus at his death (*AH* 2.22.3).

In addition to Irenaeus, Hill finds aspects of Eusebius’ account of the origins of the Gospel of John (*HE* 3.24.5-17) in Epiphanius’ testimony, as well as the more notable influence of Origen. Hill makes the compelling case that Epiphanius likely drew the criticisms of the *Alogi* from Origen’s *Commentary on John*. Prior to the *Alogi*’s criticism regarding John’s omission of the forty-day temptation, Origen had made the same accusation (*Comm. Jo.* 10.2). Likewise, the second objection of the *Alogi* has parallels with some of Origen’s comments later in the same work (*Comm. Jo.* 10.14).¹²¹

Hill’s brief analysis of Epiphanius’ source materials is extremely valuable in locating which sources may have comprised the aggregate *Alogi*. It is, however, limited in scope. For example, he does not survey the possible sources for Epiphanius’ testimony regarding the criticisms of the Apocalypse, nor does he

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 143. Brent only suggests that these may have included Porphyry, Celsus and Philoabbatius, whom Epiphanius names in *Haer.* 51.8.1.

¹¹⁹ C.E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹²⁰ Ibid., 186.

¹²¹ For Hill’s analysis of Epiphanius’ possible source material, see *ibid.*, 186-90.

recognize various other aspects of the account of the *Alogi* that derives from the writings of Epiphanius' predecessors. Hill also stops short of any detailed analysis of the bar Salibi commentaries or the *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu, which have dominated the discussion of the *Alogi* for over a century.

Thus, from Hill's perspective, Brent "scores some very important points" and "may be correct overall",¹²² but his support is tempered with a healthy degree of caution. "It is understandable that some may want to withhold full endorsement of Brent's position, pending further studies."¹²³ It is true that the complexities of the evidence surrounding the *Alogi* extend well beyond the recent analyses of Brent and Hill; nevertheless, their works have provided an important contribution and counterpoint to the consensus view regarding the *Alogi* and the early ecclesiastical sentiments toward the Johannine corpus.

In light of the history of scholarship on the question of the *Alogi*, there are two distinct ways of viewing the history and significance of this heresy. On the one hand, a majority of scholars continue to uphold the consensus view that they represent the negative sentiments of the early church towards the Johannine writings. On the other hand, there have emerged a handful of scholars that question whether the influence of the *Alogi* in the early church extends beyond the imagination of Epiphanius. There is, however, more to the story than that which is told by proponents of the consensus view as articulated by Smith as well as that which Brent and Hill have uncovered. The evidence demonstrates this, and thus it is the evidence that must now be addressed.

¹²² Ibid., 186.

¹²³ Ibid., 191.

CHAPTER TWO

The Origins of the Alogi

Epiphanius derives much of his information for his *Panarion* from a number of earlier sources, but he has been accused of being heavily reliant upon one of his predecessors in particular, Hippolytus of Rome. As noted in the previous chapter, a number of scholars have argued that this is certainly true for his testimony of the *Alogi*. In his comments about this heresy, T. H. Robinson goes so far as to call Epiphanius the “arch plagiarist” of Hippolytus.¹²⁴ Yet, it is interesting that no extant work of Hippolytus appears to show any knowledge of this group. Although it is a common assumption that Hippolytus was Epiphanius’ source, the evidence stacks up in favor of a very different conclusion. The purpose of this chapter is to examine whether it is possible to determine if Hippolytus knew and wrote about the *Alogi* or if this heresy is original to the bishop of Salamis.

In the first portion of this chapter, attention will be given to the complex set of evidence concerning the historical figure known as Hippolytus, after which the focus will turn to the external evidence that is often used to support the hypothesis of Epiphanius’ dependence on Hippolytus. I shall demonstrate that the presumption of Hippolytan origins of the *Alogi* is unnecessary and misguided. In contrast, the latter half of this chapter will examine the internal evidence of Epiphanius’ account of the *Alogi*, where one finds clear evidence that this heresy originated with Epiphanius himself.

2.1 The Hippolytus Question

Before addressing the question of whether or not Hippolytus knew of the *Alogi*, it is important to recognize that there are many ambiguities that surround this figure and his works. That a person with this name was an important person in the early church is certifiable; whether or not it is possible to know with any degree of certainty where and when he lived, which works he wrote, and whether or not there

¹²⁴ Robinson, 494, referring to the work, “Heads against Gaius”. See the similar sentiments in Grant, “Fourth Gospel,” 108; Culpepper, *John*, 122.

existed multiple persons by this name who were active in the early third century church is a matter of contention.

The traditional portrayal of Hippolytus paints him as an active member of the church in Rome at the dawn of the third century. He is said to have been a staunch opponent of monarchianism. He is also known for his sharp criticisms against the Roman bishop Callistus (218-222 A.D.), which has added to his reputation of being a schismatic church leader and the first antipope of the Christian church in Rome. Hippolytus is also credited with a sizeable literary output, ranging from theological works to commentaries on Scripture and polemics against heresies. Although this is the common way of calibrating the vast array of evidence ranging from the corpus of works ascribed to him to archaeological evidence and patristic sources, for well over a century there have been persistent questions regarding whether or not this array of evidence can actually be collected to paint a coherent picture of Hippolytus of Rome. A brief survey of the early evidence demonstrates this.

Eusebius (*HE* 6.20) and Jerome (*De vir. ill.* 61) speak of a man by the name of Hippolytus who presided over a church, though neither mentions where. They also portray him as a prolific writer of various exegetical works in addition to a polemic against the heresies. Eusebius lists seven works of Hippolytus, five of which correspond to the list of eighteen provided by Jerome. Some of the titles provided by Eusebius and Jerome appear to correspond to a list of thirteen works inscribed on the plinth of a statue of Hippolytus, originally discovered in a mutilated state, the figure being unrecognizable, though representative of a woman. On its side is etched a paschal calendar that appears to match Eusebius' notice of a similar work by Hippolytus. There are other titles listed on the back of the statue, some of which bear similarities to those of Jerome's list of Hippolytan works, as well other works noted in the later record of Photius. On the basis of these correlations as well as the putative location of its discovery, the statue was restored to resemble Hippolytus and the works inscribed on the plinth were added to his literary legacy. However, these works, the statue's reconstruction, and the supposed location of its discovery are all far from certain.

Apollinaris of Laodicea, in a fragment from his commentary on Daniel, notes a certain “Hippolytus, most holy bishop of Rome”.¹²⁵ About the same time, Theodoret, in his work, the *Eranistes* (1.88), implicitly portrays Hippolytus as an eastern writer, but he provides him with no specific location. He gives excerpts from nine works of Hippolytus, none of which match the lists of Hippolytan works of Eusebius or Jerome. In the ninth century, Photius (*Bibl.* 121) records that Hippolytus was a pupil of Irenaeus, and he lists an obscure work of Hippolytus, the *Syntagma Against Thirty Two Heresies*.¹²⁶ As noted earlier, centuries after Photius, Dionysius bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu, suggest the existence of a Hippolytan work that was written against a certain Gaius. In addition to this work known as *Heads against Gaius*, Ebed-Jesu also lists other works that are otherwise unknown.¹²⁷ Ebed-Jesu does not mention his provenance, yet bar Salibi clearly refers to him as *Hippolytus Romanus*. The eastern provenance of Ebed-Jesu and bar Salibi in addition to their unique information about Hippolytus have contributed to further confusion surrounding his provenance and corpus of works.

When it comes to references to Hippolytus, there is a good cache of evidence; however, when attempts are made to bring this evidence into a coherent portrait of the man and his works, there is plenty of room for confusion. For example, why do the lists of Hippolytan works from various sources vary so widely? Why is he portrayed as a protégé of Irenaeus and a Roman schismatic antipope in some of the evidence, and an eastern writer elsewhere? Were there two early Christian writers by the name of Hippolytus, one from Rome and one from the east, each writing various works that were to become collected into a singular corpus due to confusion surrounding the fact that there were two persons with the same name? Or was there a single, itinerant Hippolytus, either from the east or from Rome, who is responsible for the entirety of the works that are ascribed to him?

¹²⁵ See A. Mai (ed.), *Scriptorum veterum nova collectio e Vaticanis codicibus*. 10 Vols. (Rome: Typis Vaticanis, 1825-1838), i, II, 173.

¹²⁶ The *Syntagma* is also mentioned in *Chronicon Paschale* 8: Ἰππόλυτος...ἐν τῷ πρὸς ἀπάσας τὰς αἱρέσεις συντάγματι.

¹²⁷ See Assemani, *BO* III.1, 15. Heine (“Hippolytus,” 145) implies that there are parallels between Ebed-Jesu’s list of Hippolytan works and those listed elsewhere, but in Section III, I suggest the opposite.

Answers to these questions vary widely, and the dispute continues. Some argue for a singular *Oriental* Hippolytus, others for a singular *Roman* Hippolytus, and still others for a multiplicity of Hippolyti.¹²⁸ Although the issues are far from settled, throughout the rest of this work, I shall provisionally assume the traditional view of a singular, Roman Hippolytus who was active at the beginning of the third century and the author of all the works ascribed to him, except in those cases where I have specific concerns over the veracity of certain claims to Hippolytan authorship.¹²⁹

2.2 The External Evidence: The *Alogi* and the Question of Hippolytan Origins

Was Epiphanius the first person to mention the group of Johannine opponents known as the *Alogi*, or was this heresy known to his predecessors? Specifically, did Epiphanius derive his knowledge of this group from Hippolytus? There are three primary pieces of evidence to support the hypothesis that he did: (i) the argument of R. A. Lipsius, which suggests that Epiphanius and another fourth-century Church Father, Philaster of Brescia, used the lost *Syntagma* of Hippolytus as the foundation for their own heresiological works; (ii) a statue of Hippolytus, which has etched on its plinth a work whose title reflects concerns over the Gospel and Apocalypse of John; and (iii) the later Syrian evidence of Dionysius bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu, who record the putative debate between Gaius and Hippolytus.

¹²⁸ The literature on the Hippolytus Question is extensive, but it is important to note the major contributions of Johann Joseph Ignaz von Döllinger, *Hippolytus and Callistus; or, The Church of Rome in the First Half of the Third Century*. Trans. Alfred Plummer (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1876); Adolf von Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bei Eusebius*, 2 pts., 4 vols. (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1893-1904), i, 2, 605-46; Pierre Nautin's argument that some works ascribed to Hippolytus actually belong to a certain Josephus as recorded by Photius: *Hippolyte et Josipe: Contribution à l'histoire de la Littérature Chrétienne du troisième siècle* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf: 1947), eadem, *Le dossier d'Hippolyte et de Mélicon dans les florilèges dogmatiques et chez les historiens modernes*. Patristica I (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1953); the modifications of Nautin's thesis and a new division of Hippolytan works by Vincenzo Loi et al., *Ricerche su Ippolito* Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 13 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1977); Miroslav Marcovich's introduction to the critical edition: *Hippolytus Refutatio Omnium Haeresium* PTS 25 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), 1-51; the argument for a Hippolytan school by Brent, *Hippolytus*, esp. 368ff.; J. A. Cerrato, *Hippolytus between East and West: The Commentaries and the Provenance of the Corpus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). A worthwhile summary may be found in Ronald E. Heine, "Hippolytus, Ps.-Hippolytus and the early canons," in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*. Edited by Frances Young, Lewis Ayres and Andrew Louth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 142-51.

¹²⁹ E.g. Ch. 9 concerning bar Salibi's and Ebed-Jesu's claims of Hippolytan writings.

In 1865, Lipsius was the first to argue for the reliance of Epiphanius, Philaster of Brescia and Ps.-Tertullian upon a common document (*Grundschrift*). This shared source was presumed to be Hippolytus' lost *Syntagma Against Thirty-Two Heresies*, noted by Photius (*Bibl.* 121).¹³⁰ Lipsius noticed parallels between the heresiological catalogues of Epiphanius, Philaster and Ps.-Tertullian, and surmised that all three were dependent upon Hippolytus' *Syntagma*. From these three works, he attempted to reconstruct the list of heresies that comprised the lost *Syntagma*. According to Lipsius, the work of Ps.-Tertullian, *Adversus Omnes Haereses*, preserved the list and order of the lost thirty-two heresies of the *Syntagma*, effectively acting as a summary of this work. His theory is still widely accepted to this day.¹³¹

The many parallels between Ps.-Tertullian and Epiphanius strengthen the argument that Epiphanius made extensive use of the *Syntagma* in the *Panarion*, however there are difficulties in assigning the *Alogi* to this lost Hippolytan work. Though it is impossible to know for certain which heresies were in Hippolytus' lost *Syntagma*, it is telling that Ps.-Tertullian's work makes no mention of such a group. Thus, Lipsius maintained that since the *Alogi* were not included in Ps.-Tertullian's work it should not be a part of his reconstructed *Syntagma*.¹³² However, Adolf von Harnack and Theodore Zahn argued for the likelihood that Hippolytus *did* refute the *Alogi*, suggesting the possibility that the work noted on the plinth of the statue of Hippolytus (ὑπὲρ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως) may have been adjoined to the *Syntagma*.¹³³

¹³⁰ R.A. Lipsius, *Zur Quellenkritik des Epiphanius* (Vienna: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1865), 16-32.

¹³¹ However, see the important critique of Lipsius' theory in general by Sebastian Moll, "Three Against Tertullian: The Second Tradition About Marcion's Life," *JTS* 59/1 (April, 2008), 169-80, esp. 172ff.

¹³² Lipsius, *Quellenkritik*, 23-8.

¹³³ Adolf von Harnack, *Zeitschrift für historische Theologie*, II (1874), 162-170, eadem, *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius*, vol. II (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1897-1904), 227; eadem, *History of Dogma*. Trans. James Millar, vol. III (Oxford: Williams & Norgate, 1897), 14. See also Theodore Zahn, *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* vol. I (Erlangen: Verlag von Andreas Deichert, 1888-1890), 223 (also vol. II, 970, 977). For Lipsius' response to Harnack, see *Die Quellen der ältesten Ketzergeschichte* (Leipzig, 1875), 93ff.

Nevertheless, Lipsius held his ground and his reconstruction of the *Syntagma* includes no mention of the *Alogi*.¹³⁴

<u>Lipsius' Syntagma</u>	<u>Ps.-Tertullian</u>	<u>Epiphanius</u>	<u>Philaster</u>
28) Quartodecimans	*Blastus (<i>AOH</i> 8) ¹³⁵	50) Quartodecimans 51) Alogi 52) Adamians	58) Quartodecimans 60) Heretics that do not accept John or Revelation
29) Theodotus	Theodotus (<i>AOH</i> 8)	53) Theodotus	50) Theodotus Byzantius

Although no heresy fitting the description of the *Alogi* is recorded by Ps.-Tertullian, the other source in the triad of Lipsius' reconstruction, Philaster, does mention a similar heretical group (*Div. Her. Lib.* 60). The critical question is whether Philaster derived his information from Epiphanius or another independent source.

Epiphanius and Philaster were contemporaries. However, even though it is difficult to know for certain when Philaster composed his *Diversarum Hereseon Liber*, it does appear to post-date Epiphanius' *Panarion* and *Ancoratus*.¹³⁶ Philaster relays a similar description as that of Epiphanius' notice of the *Alogi*, only in much shorter form. He redacts the title and replaces it simply with "others", which is a common designation throughout this work.

Others (*Alii*) after these are the heretics who do not accept (*non accipiunt*) the Gospel of John and his Apocalypse, and since they do not understand the virtue of Scripture nor do they wish to learn, they persist, persistently being lost in

¹³⁴ For an expanded table of the works of these authors, see Lightfoot, *AF* i 2, 415-18.

¹³⁵ *Ps.-Tertullian refers to Blastus as a person with Quartodeciman convictions. In Pacianus' *Epistola ad Sympronian. de catholico nomine*, ch. 2 a certain Blastus is described as a Montanist in addition to being a Quartodeciman. Irenaeus is known to have written a letter to Blastus (*On Schism*) that is no longer extant, addressing Blastus' heretical teachings in Rome. These may have been the impetus for his fall from the presbyterate (*HE* 5.20.1; 5.15). Eusebius connects Blastus with Florinus, who also fell from the same presbyterate, however Florinus was a gnostic (*HE* 5.15; 5.20.1).

¹³⁶ Philaster's work was composed around 384 A.D. Lightfoot (*AF*, i, 2, 415) argues for a date around 380. Epiphanius' *Panarion* was begun in 374-375 A.D. ("the eleventh year of the reigns of Valentinian and Valens and the eighth of Gratian's"; *Haer.* Proem II 2.3) and completed about three years later. The *Ancoratus* was written in 374 A.D. in which he outlined the heresies that were to comprise the *Panarion* (*Ancor.* 12.7-13.8).

heresy, and also they dare to say that <the Gospel according to John> and his Apocalypse are not of the blessed John the Evangelist and Apostle, but Cerinthus (*non beati Iohannis euangelistae et apostoli, sed Cerinthi heretici*), who at the time when he was clearly a heretic, was thrown away from the Church by the blessed Apostle.¹³⁷

If Philaster derived his information about this group from Epiphanius, as I believe the evidence suggests,¹³⁸ it is not likely to have come from the brief notice of the *Alogi* in Epiphanius' *Ancoratus* because no mention of Cerinthus is made there (*Ancor.* 2.13). In this case, he must have summarized the details he found in the *Panarion*. This is not the only instance where Philaster mimics information from the *Panarion* that is not found elsewhere. For example, the Sabellians (*Haer.* 62; *Div. Her. Lib.* 54), Paul the Samosatian (*Haer.* 65; *Div. Her. Lib.* 64), the Manicheans (*Haer.* 66; *Div. Her. Lib.* 61) and the Photinians (*Haer.* 71; *Div. Her. Lib.* 65) are all sources common to Epiphanius and Philaster, but are absent from the witness of Ps.-Tertullian and Hippolytus' *Refutatio*.

A number of scholars have overlooked the fact that Lipsius did *not* include the *Alogi* in his reconstruction of Hippolytus' lost *Syntagma*. For example, at the end of the nineteenth century, George Fisher claims that Lipsius proved that Hippolytus was the first to speak of the *Alogi*.¹³⁹ John Gwynn, states that Lipsius has made it "practically certain" that Epiphanius and Philaster are indebted to the lost *Syntagma* for their information about this group.¹⁴⁰ Later, in his affirmation of Lipsius' theory Gustave Bardy would pronounce, "on se rend compte qu'Épiphane a trouvé sans doute dans le *Syntagma* du prêtre romain l'essentiel de sa notice."¹⁴¹ Moreover, Robert Grant asserts, "The whole of Epiphanius' fifty-first chapter against the *Alogi*, as has been realized since 1865, is based on Hippolytus."¹⁴²

¹³⁷ CSEL 38 (Vindobonae: F. Tempsky, 1898), 31-32.

¹³⁸ See A.F.J. Klijn and G.J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects. NovTSup* 36 (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 14-18. In addition to Philaster, they also indicate other areas of reliance on Epiphanius by Ps.-Hieronimus, Augustine and Dionysius bar Salibi. Bludau (154ff.) also sees Philaster as dependent upon Epiphanius.

¹³⁹ George P. Fisher, *Some Remarks on the Alogi* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1892), 3.

¹⁴⁰ Gwynn, 407. In light of the bar Salibi evidence, Gwynn states (408), "[T]he theory of Lipsius concerning the relation between the *Panarion* of Epiphanius and the lost *Refutation of the Thirty-two Heresies* of Hippolytus, has received independent and strong confirmation."

¹⁴¹ Gustave Bardy, "Cerinthe," *Revue Biblique* 30 (1921), 371.

¹⁴² Grant, "Fourth Gospel," 108.

The fact remains, however, that there is absolutely no allusion to the *Alogi* anywhere in the work of Ps.-Tertullian. Lipsius' argument that the *Alogi* were not included in the *Grundschrift* may therefore be correct.¹⁴³ Rather, the evidence suggests that Philaster's notice of a similar group came by way of Epiphanius, not Hippolytus. There are other scholars who agree. As Labriolle notes, it is unlikely that Philaster knew the original heretical texts, but rather summarized ecclesiastical sources, and thus, "It hardly seems open to doubt, although this has been contested, that he had before him the *Panarion* of St Epiphanius."¹⁴⁴ He also argued that the *Syntagma* was not foundational for Epiphanius' testimony of the *Alogi* either.¹⁴⁵ For his part, August Bludau is in total agreement: Philaster got his information from Epiphanius.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, William Tabbernee has recently noted that recent scholarship has generally concluded that the similarities between Philaster, Epiphanius and Ps.-Tertullian cannot be explained by a shared source. Rather, "The agreement between Epiphanius and Filaster is due to Filaster's use of Epiphanius' treatise. Epiphanius in turn used Pseudo-Tertullian, but Filaster appears not to have used Pseudo-Tertullian."¹⁴⁷

Given that the theory regarding Epiphanius' dependence on the *Syntagma* for his portrayal of the *Alogi* is unlikely, it is necessary to inquire into other possible Hippolytan sources. One would naturally turn next to Hippolytus' *Refutatio Omnium Haeresium* (*Elenchos*) as a likely possibility. Yet while there are definite parallels that may be drawn between some of the sects in the *Panarion* and the *Refutatio*, the latter excludes any allusion to the *Alogi* or any opposition to the Gospel and Apocalypse of John.¹⁴⁸ Thus, out of the possible heresiological works from Hippolytus, neither the *Syntagma* nor the *Refutatio* demonstrate that he was aware of

¹⁴³ Labriolle, *Sources*, LXXV.

¹⁴⁴ Pierre de Labriolle, *The History and Literature of Christianity from Tertullian to Boethius*, trans. Herbert Wilson (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1968), 299. He also states, "Que conclure d'une telle lacune, sinon que dans le *Syntagma*, les Aloges n'avaient point trouvé place? D'autre part, la notice de Philastre, extrêmement sèche et courte, coïncide avec les données fondamentales d'Épiphanie (encore que le nom d'«Aloges» n'y soit pas reproduit), et il est probable que Philastre s'y inspire du *Panarion*." (*Sources*, LXXV)

¹⁴⁵ Labriolle, *Sources*, LXXV.

¹⁴⁶ Bludau, 154-5.

¹⁴⁷ Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 75.

¹⁴⁸ See A. Pourkier, 67-8, 105. See also Smith, "Gaius," 209; Harris, 51-2.

a heretical group that matched the description of the *Alogi*. There is, however, another major piece of evidence that may indicate Hippolytus wrote against this sect.

The Statue of Hippolytus

Is it possible that Hippolytus refuted the *Alogi* in his lost work, ὑπὲρ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως, listed on the back of the plinth of the statue of Hippolytus in Rome? It is certainly possible, but this work has not survived, thus relegating any link between it and Epiphanius' *Alogi* to the realm of conjecture. Scholars from Lightfoot and Robinson up to Smith have argued that this work was indeed the ultimate source of Epiphanius' *Alogi* and Dionysius bar Salibi's commentaries.¹⁴⁹ However, such an argument is not as clear-cut as it may seem.

First, the argument that this work was the source of Epiphanius (and others) presumes that the statue and its list of works are to be associated with Hippolytus of Rome – a point that is of intense debate.¹⁵⁰ At the heart of the issue is the fact that the statue was originally found by Pirro Ligorio in the sixteenth century in a mutilated state, missing its upper part.¹⁵¹ Thus, it is unclear whose image this statue originally represented. Yet the works noted on the plinth of the statue are presumed to be original and date to the first quarter of the third-century. Because of the location of the statue's discovery, which is also a matter of debate,¹⁵² and because some of the titles on the plinth of the statue corresponded with known works of Hippolytus of Rome, it was reconstructed accordingly and it now stands at the

¹⁴⁹ Lightfoot, *AF* i, 2, 394-5; Robinson, 494; Smith, "Gaius," 209; Bludau, 165; and Prigent, "Hippolyte, commentateur de l'Apocalypse," *TZ* 28 (1972), 407-412. Labriolle argued that Epiphanius used either (or both) the Hippolytan work *Heads against Gaius*, noted by the later Syrian writer Ebed-Jesu, and *Defense of the Gospel etc.* in his chapter on the *Alogi*. (Labriolle, *Sources*, LXXI).

¹⁵⁰ Pierre Nautin has argued that the works are more appropriately to be attributed to a certain Josephus based primarily on the testimony of Photius who attributes some of the works found on the statue to a person of this name (*Bibl.* 48; 121), however Nautin's works have not received widespread agreement. See Pierre Nautin, *Hippolyte et Josipe: Contribution a l'histoire de la Littérature Chrétienne du troisième siècle* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1947); eadem, *Hippolyte, Contre les heresies: fragment, etude, et edition critique* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1949).

¹⁵¹ See Brent, *Hippolytus*, 9-10, who records Ligorio's own description of the location and statue (as found in *ms.*, Naples XIII B 7, p. 424). Here Ligorio describes the statue as being "in certe ruine".

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 9-38; also Margherita Guarducci, "La 'Statua di Sant' Ippolito' e la sua provenienza," in *Nuove ricerche su Ippolito*, *Studia Ephemeridis Augustiniana* 30 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1989), 61-74, who argues against the reliability of the testimony of Ligorio concerning the location of his discovery.

entrance to the Vatican Library in Rome. Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated that the original statue was actually of a female figure – possibly Themista of Lampsacus, or Hippolyta.¹⁵³

Even if this work is by Hippolytus, there is reason for caution in assuming that it was the singular source for Epiphanius' *Alogi*. The traditional rendering of the transcription of the work on the plinth of the statue reads ὑπὲρ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως, which many scholars have associated with the title of a work of Hippolytus provided by Ebed-Jesu in his *Catalogue*: ἀπολογία ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀποκαλύψεως καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰωάννου.¹⁵⁴ Regarding these two notices, Lightfoot argued, "From the preposition (ὑπὲρ, not περί) and from the association of the two works together, it is a safe inference that this was an apologetic work, directed against those persons who objected to both works alike."¹⁵⁵ Streeter agreed, noting that the title itself demonstrated a coordinated backlash to the Johannine literature: "No one defends what nobody attacks. We must, then, infer that there were people who rejected both."¹⁵⁶

But as Brent points out, M. Guarducci has detected a [τ]α before the ὑπὲρ.¹⁵⁷ She was preceded in this notion long ago by H. Achelis, who indicates the existence of the article in his list of Hippolytan works on the statue.¹⁵⁸ I have also examined the statue myself, and the existence of an alpha before "ὑπὲρ" is undeniable. Although a crack in the statue has destroyed the top portion of the letter, that which remains is clearly recognizable. A very careful eye would be able to see it in the

¹⁵³ The statue and the works inscribed on it is the focal point of the recent work of Allen Brent, *Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century*. For a brief summary of the issues surrounding the so-called-statue of Hippolytus, see E. Prinzivalli, "Hippolytus, Statue of." in *EEC*, I, 385; Heine, "Hippolytus," 142-51. That the statue was originally represented a female was noted by Margherita Guarducci, "La statua di 'Sant'Ippolito' in Vaticano," *Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia* 47 (1974-75), 163-90. For the statue as Themista of Lampsacus see M. Guarducci, "La Statua di «Sant'Ippolito»" in *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 13 (1977), 17-30. For the statue as Hippolyta, see M. Vinzent, "Hippolyt von Rom und seine Statue," in *zur Zeit oder Unzeit. Studien zur spätantiken Theologie-, Geistes- und Kunstgeschichte und ihrer Nachwirkung*. Hans Georg Thümmel zu Ehren, eds A.M. Ritter, W. Wischmeyer, and W. Kinzig. Texts and Studies in the History of Theology, 9. (Cambridge, 2004), 125-34.

¹⁵⁴ Greek translation of the original Syriac title of Ebed-Jesu's *Catalogue* is found in Lightfoot, *AF*, i, 2, 150.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 394.

¹⁵⁶ Streeter, *Four Gospels*, 437.

¹⁵⁷ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 172. Nautin's list of works on the statue reflects this as well. See Nautin, *Hippolyte et Josipe*, 18.

¹⁵⁸ H. Achelis, "Hippolytstudien," *TU Heft* 4 (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1897), 4.

image provided by Brent in his recent work.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, if one follows the left margin from the bottom of the works listed on the rear corner of the statue (over the right shoulder of the figure), there is enough room for a tau before the alpha, but nothing more. Thus, the word ἀπολογία could not have been a part of that original title. It is true that ὑπὲρ plus the genitive may indicate an apologetic work, but it is not the only solution. As Brent notes, it is also possible that the title may also be rendered more broadly as “matters concerning the Gospel according to John and Apocalypse” (i.e. [τ]ὰ ὑπὲρ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως).¹⁶⁰

Nevertheless, Smith and others are confident that it is an apologetic work and that the bar Salibi commentaries reflect and preserve its contents. However, it must be noted that the tendency to assume that this work was a defense of the Johannine literature is predicated on its association with the work of Hippolytus listed in the *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu, which post-dates the statue by over a millennium. It is true that the titles bear some resemblance, yet there are major differences as well. As Brent notes, the titles are not identical: not only does the title on the statue exclude any indication that it was an apologetic work, the order of the Johannine works are in reverse order from those of Ebed-Jesu’s *Catalogue*.¹⁶¹ Just because Ebed-Jesu mentions an apologetic work whose title is similar to that on the statue, it does not necessarily follow that the title on the statue must have been an apologetic work as well.¹⁶² In fact, Pierre Nautin has made a compelling case that Ebed-Jesu may never have read the *Apology* he listed; rather, Nautin argues that Ebed-Jesu surmised its existence from reading bar Salibi’s *Commentary on the Apocalypse*.¹⁶³ I shall argue in Chapter 9 that Ebed-Jesu’s entire list of Hippolytus’ works does not reflect first-hand knowledge of these texts.

Ebed-Jesu’s *Catalogue* does not provide the only explanation for this work listed on the statue. It is known from the writings of Dionysius of Alexandria, for example, that there were questions regarding the authorship of these works (cf. *HE* 7.25). Eusebius, in his comments on Papias’ testimony, suggests that there may have

¹⁵⁹ See Brent, *Hippolytus*, pref., plate 5 – “Plinth: Inscription of List of Literary Works”.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., *Hippolytus*, 172. See also Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 184.

¹⁶¹ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 172.

¹⁶² Contrary to Achelis (“Hippolytstudien,” 6), who argues that the two titles are identical.

¹⁶³ Nautin, *Dossier*, 146.

been two different persons named “John” who wrote these works (*HE* 3.39.6). Earlier, Dionysius of Alexandria makes the same point as well (*HE* 7.25). Thus, Hippolytus could have addressed the concerns over Johannine authorship for the Gospel and Apocalypse in this work. Brent argues that it may have addressed the Johannine dating of the Crucifixion on Passover Day, which was a major concern for the Hippolytan community, though I find this questionable given that this is not a prominent theme in the Apocalypse.¹⁶⁴

Finally, there is no indication from the title on the statue that Hippolytus wrote it as a polemic against Gaius. Just as there is no room on the statue for the word ἀπολογία, it is also true that the title could not have read Κεφάλαια κατὰ Γαΐου ὑπὲρ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως, as Harris suggested.¹⁶⁵ There is, in fact, no clear indication that any Hippolytan work served as the proof-text upon which Epiphanius and others relied for all of the information of the *Alogi*. Yet there is one additional argument for a connection between Epiphanius and Hippolytus that must be explored regarding the possibility that Hippolytus was the original source of the name *Alogi*.

Hippolytus and the Title Alogi

In his testimony, Epiphanius claims responsibility for the title *Alogi*, but some have argued that it actually came from Hippolytus. The primary argument for this view, touted by Lightfoot, Harris and others, is a comparison of the title *Alogi* with Hippolytus’ reference to the heretic Noetus as “ἀνόητους” (“unintelligent”; *Ref.* 9.10.9). They argue that Epiphanius, in his argument against the Noetians, likely derived this notice from Hippolytus Νοήτου ἔχων ὄνομα, ἀνόητος ὑπάρχει καὶ οἱ ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἀνοητοῦντες (*Haer.* 57.6.4).¹⁶⁶ Thus, if Hippolytus was clever enough to

¹⁶⁴ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 172. See 63-5, where Brent provides solid evidence connecting this issue with the Gospel of John, but nothing to directly associate it with the Apocalypse.

¹⁶⁵ Harris, 46.

¹⁶⁶ Lightfoot originally believed that Epiphanius’ use of the *Alogi* was “avowedly his own invention.” J.B. Lightfoot, “Internal Evidence for the Authenticity and Genuineness of Saint John’s Gospel” in *The Fourth Gospel and Its Authorship*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1892), 134. He would later change his mind, suggesting instead that, “Indeed we may suspect that Epiphanius borrowed the name ἄλογοι ‘the irrational ones’ from Hippolytus; for these jokes are very much in his way; e.g. νοητός, ἀνόητος...” (cf. *C. Noet.* 8; *Ref.* 9.10). Eadem, *AF*, i, 2, 394. See also eadem, *Biblical Essays* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1893), 119. Harris later agreed with this assessment of Lightfoot, arguing, “the presence of the title *Alogi* is probable in the book or table of heresies upon which Epiphanius is working.” Harris, 51-2. See also Smith, “Gaius,” 217-21. Nautin also noted, “dans ces

prefix an alpha before “Noetus”, it is likely he did the same for “Logos” (*viz.* a-logoi) and spoke of such a group that rejected the Gospel and Apocalypse of John in one of his lost works. However, Hippolytus’ use of “ἀνόητους” may not be as significant as many suggest.

For one thing, as Marcovich notes in the recent critical edition of the *Refutatio*, in this passage (*Ref.* 9.10.9) ἀνοήτους is actually transmitted as νοητούς in Codex Parisinus suppl. gr. 464 f. 112r, the only full manuscript to preserve books IV-X of the *Refutatio*.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, in other places where it would have been natural for Hippolytus to have used the term ἀνοήτους, no such instance occurs. For example, *C. Noet.* 3, reads “οὐκ ἤδη δέ, εἰ Νοητὸς μὴ νοῆ, παρὰ τοῦτο ἔκβληται αἱ γραφαί,” and *C. Noet.* 8 reads “Νοητὸς μὴ νοῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν.”¹⁶⁸ If “ἀνόητους” is a truly significant wordplay by Hippolytus, one would have expected to clearly see it at least in these citations and possibly other places throughout his work *Contra Noetus*, however no other such instances exist.

Furthermore, the title *Alogi* never appears in the extant Hippolytan corpus. There are various instances where one finds derivations of the Greek word beginning with “Alog-”, however, an examination of these occurrences demonstrates that not a single one could be interpreted as similar to Epiphanius’ *Alogi*.¹⁶⁹ Attributing this title to Hippolytus is perhaps forcing something to be the case that simply is not. Rather, there are alternative sources that may have influenced Epiphanius’ creation of this title. As Hill notes, one possibility may be Dionysius of Alexandria, who

notices du *Panarion* l’image d’ensemble la plus fidèle des notices correspondantes du *Syntagma*.” P. Nautin, *Hippolyte, Contra les heresies, fragment. Étude et édition critique* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1949), 69.

¹⁶⁷ Marcovich, 347. So also it is found to be νοητούς in Millerus in editione pricipie Oxoniensi; see L. Duncker and F.G. Schneidewin, eds. *S. Hippolyti Episcopi et Martyris: Refutationis Omnium Haeresium: Librorum Decem Quae Supersunt* (Gottingae: Sumptibus Dieterichianis, 1859), 448. Harris was aware of this transmission, but he ignores its significance. See Harris, 51.

¹⁶⁸ Harris, 51; also 6-8.

¹⁶⁹ A search of “αλογ-” and all the possible lexical derivations in the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae database offers thirteen possible derivations and only twenty-two total instances of these derivations in the extant Hippolytan writings (transliterated): (1) “Αλογα” occurs three times: *Dan.* 2.4; *Ref.* Prologue 1; *Ref.* 4.10. (2) “Αλογον” occurs three times: *Ref.* 9.17, 10.5, 10.31. (3) “Αλογος” occurs once in *C. Noet.* 10.2. (4) “Αλογου” occurs once in *Fragmentum in Genesim* 4.23. (5) “Αλογους” occurs once in two different editions: *Fragmenta in Proverbia* (Achelis) Frag. 6 line 6; *Fragmenta in Proverbia* (Richard) Frag. 6 section 5 line 2. (6) “Αλογων” occurs twice: *Ref.* 5.7, 5.16. (7) “Αλογως” occurs four times: *Fragmenta in Psalmos [sp.]* (Achelis) Frag. 9 line 52; *Ref.* 4.42, 6.21, 10.19. (8) “Αλογω” occurs once: *Ref.* 10.33. (9) “Αλογιας” occurs once: *Ref.* 7.36. (10) “Αλογια” occurs once: *Fragmenta in Psalmos [sp.]* (Achelis) Frag. 22 line 24. (11) “Αλογιστου” occurs once: *Ref.* Prologue 1. (12) “Αλογιστωσ” occurs once: *Ref.* 6.19. (13) “Αλογιστω” occurs once: *Ref.* 10.5.

refers to those who rejected the Apocalypse as “unintelligible and illogical” (ἄγνωστον τε καὶ ἀσυλλόγιστον; *HE* 7.25.1). Hill states, “[these] alpha-privative adjectives...could have given Epiphanius the idea for his pejorative ἄλογοι, aptly taken from John 1:1, 14.”¹⁷⁰ Even if Hill is correct, and I suspect he might be, Epiphanius is still ultimately responsible for the title *Alogi*. It is a clever designation with a *double entendre*: the *Alogi* aptly represents those who are without the Logos as well as those who are without reason, or “irrational ones”.

Not only is there almost no reason to suggest Hippolytus came up with the title *Alogi*, it is also clear that the other evidence such as the statue of Hippolytus and the Hippolytan corpus of works – both extant and lost – does not warrant the conclusion that Epiphanius relied solely upon Hippolytus for his account of the *Alogi*.¹⁷¹ An examination of the internal evidence of Epiphanius’ testimony as well as careful look at Epiphanius himself will provide further clarity as to whether or not this heresy, both in name and in substance, was his own construction.

2.3 The Internal Evidence: Epiphanius’ Testimony of the *Alogi*

In order to determine whether or not Epiphanius is responsible for the creation of this heresy, it is necessary to examine the form and content of his own account. There are four major sections to the literary structure of his record of the *Alogi*. He opens his discussion with a general introduction (*Haer.* 51.1.1-51.2.5), followed by a lengthy treatment of the arguments of the *Alogi* against the Gospel of John (*Haer.* 51.3.1-51.31.11), which constitutes the vast majority of his description of this sect.¹⁷² A very brief discussion of the arguments against the Apocalypse comprises the third section (*Haer.* 51.32.1-51.34.8), followed by Epiphanius’ concluding remarks (*Haer.* 51.35.1-4).

Throughout his testimony there are various indications that Epiphanius may have taken certain creative liberties with this heresy. This is seen clearly in his introduction:

¹⁷⁰ Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 187.

¹⁷¹ Moreover, as I shall argue in Chapter 9, this is true also for the record of Dionysius bar Salibi.

¹⁷² Approximately ten times the amount of discussion is devoted to the Gospel of John as compared to that of the Apocalypse.

Therefore these *Alogi* (ἄλογοι) – for this is the name I am giving to them. From now on, they shall be so called, beloved. We shall call them this name, these *Alogi*, for they held to the heresy for which [that] name <was worthy>: they rejected the books of John. Since they do not accept the Word, which John has preached, they will be called *Alogi*. Being absolute strangers to the message of truth, they deny the purity of the message and accept neither the Gospel of John nor the Apocalypse. And if they accepted the Gospel, but rejected the Apocalypse, we would say they are doing it on account of precision – not accepting an ‘apocryphon’ because of the deep and dark sayings in the Apocalypse. But when they do not receive the books which are preached from Saint John, it is clear to everyone that they and those like them are those concerning whom Saint John said in his general epistles, ‘It is the last hour, and you heard that the Antichrist is coming and now behold there are many Antichrists’ (I Jn. 2:16)... For they say that these works are not from John but Cerinthus and are not worthy to be affirmed in the Church (*Haer.* 51.3.1-6).¹⁷³

And it can be shown from this hostility that, ‘They neither understand what they are saying nor what they maintain strongly’ (I Tim. 1:7). For how can the words against Cerinthus be by Cerinthus? Cerinthus says that Christ is ‘recent’ and only a man, but John has proclaimed that [Christ] is the eternal Word who has come from on high and been made flesh. Therefore their frivolous attack has been put to shame as a false accusation and unaware from where it is refuted. For they appear to believe as we do, but not holding to the certainties that are from God revealed to us through Saint John, they will be convicted of shouting against the truth about things that they do not know. They will be known to them, if they return to sobriety of mind (ἀνανήψαι) and knowingly understand; for we are not rejecting the teachings of the Holy Spirit, which are important and authoritative (*Haer.* 51.4.1-4).¹⁷⁴

Epiphanius’ introduction points to the fact that he is creating a heretical group that is otherwise unknown.¹⁷⁵ This is seen not only in the fact that he repeatedly claims responsibility for this group’s title, it is also corroborated by the fact that there is not a single mention of the *Alogi* by any other early Church Father prior to

¹⁷³ GCS 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 250-1.

¹⁷⁴ GCS 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 251.

¹⁷⁵ In addition to these direct mentions of the name *Alogi* in the introduction, there are two other references to the *Alogi* in this chapter of the *Panarion*, located in the middle and latter portions. In *Haer.* 51.17.10, Epiphanius asks rhetorically, “What are they thinking – those who have deceived their own mind and vomited this heresy on the world that refuses the Gospel according to John? I was right to call their heresy ‘*Alogi*’ because they will not accept the divine Word who came from on high – the Word which John has preached.” Again, Epiphanius says in *Haer.* 51.28.4, “And those who have rejected the Gospel according to John have been put to shame. I am right to call them *Alogi* since they throw away the Word of God – the Word of the Father that was preached by John, which has come down from heaven and accomplished our salvation [through] his advent in the flesh.” Another reference is found in Epiphanius’ earlier work, the *Ancoratus*: “The *Alogi*, who do not accept the Gospel and the Revelation of John” (*Ancor.* 2.13). There are three additional, albeit rather benign appearances of the title *Alogi* in the *Panarion*: one where Epiphanius introduces the Theodotians as an “offshoot of the heresy of the *Alogi*” (*Haer.* 54.1.1), one in Proem I (4.5; 5.6), and one further reference in the fourth Anacephalaeosis, where Epiphanius again takes credit for this epithet. There is some question of the authenticity of the Anacephalaeoses in the *Panarion*. For more on this see F. Williams (trans.), *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis: Book I (Sects 1-46)* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), xvii; Young Richard Kim, “The Imagined Worlds of Epiphanius of Salamis,” (Ph.D. Diss. University of Michigan, 2006), 16-17.

Epiphanius. If such a group that took the audacious position of not only rejecting the Gospel and Apocalypse of John but also attributing these works to the heretic Cerinthus did exist, it is truly remarkable that this heresy was never addressed by Epiphanius' predecessors.

Thus, when it is said, "Recent scholarship has therefore dismissed the Alogoi from the stage of history [because we] have no evidence of such a group,"¹⁷⁶ it is clear that at least some within scholarship recognize the fact that there is a problem corroborating Epiphanius' testimony with those who came before him. As a solution to this dilemma, many have taken the later testimonies of bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu at face value, noting that Gaius matches some of the attributes of the *Alogi*, and therefore conclude that he acted alone in rejecting the Johannine Logos.¹⁷⁷

However, it is worth noting that this conclusion was never reached prior to the emergence of the commentaries of Dionysius bar Salibi. The important question is whether or not the later evidence really provides an accurate conclusion to the question of the *Alogi*, especially when writers like Eusebius and Jerome praise Gaius' orthodoxy on the one hand, but strongly disagreed with his anti-Johannine views on the other? In Section III of this work, I shall argue that the bar Salibi evidence is not as reliable as many have assumed in determining the truth about the *Alogi*, nor does the evidence suggest Gaius of Rome actually campaigned against the Johannine literature. Indeed, the whole quest of clarifying the nature, provenance, dates and theology of the *Alogi* up to the present has not properly taken into account the unique aspects of Epiphanius as a heresiologist.

There are three possibilities that exist that would explain Epiphanius' account of this heresy. First, he had in his cache of works an unknown source that spoke of such a group, and he drew upon this work for his testimony of the *Alogi*. Second, he simply made the whole thing up and the *Alogi* has no textual or historical foundations at all outside his own imagination. Third, Epiphanius constructed a heretical sect that would encompass the various issues surrounding the Gospel of

¹⁷⁶ Culpepper, *John*, 122.

¹⁷⁷ This is seen clearly in the conclusion of Smith ("Gaius," 427), "*The name 'Alogi' is entirely a fictitious fabrication by Epiphanius himself and in no way does it represent an historical group. There is only one known so called 'Alogi' who rejected the Gospel of John and Revelation and denied that John the Disciple was the author, and he is the historical Gaius of Rome.*" See also Schwartz, "Über den Tod," 40, 44; eadem, "Noch einmal," 99; Ladeuze, 49-60.

John and the Apocalypse of which he was made aware from reading the testimonies of his forebears.

Regarding the first possibility, the above examination has demonstrated that this conclusion is tenuous and requires one to presume the content of works that no longer exist. The following chapters will further demonstrate the fact that Epiphanius is reliant upon multiple sources for his account. For the second possibility, it is conceivable that Epiphanius was clever enough to create a fictitious heretical group out of thin air. After all, Epiphanius is capable of all sorts of exaggeration where his imagination is presented as fact. The examples are plentiful. There is the heroic tale of Epiphanius bravely resisting the lustful advances of a number of Gnostic seductresses who, “with impudent boldness tried to seduce [Epiphanius] ...because they desired [him] in [his] youth.” Epiphanius records that he “escaped without being ensnared by their bait,” and subsequently reported these women to the local bishops so that those who were “hidden within the church” (about eighty altogether) could be driven out of the city (*Haer.* 26.17.4-9). Even in his witness against the *Alogi* Epiphanius claims to have personally drunk out of one of a number of streams and rivers – including the Nile – that annually turn into wine as a commemoration of the first miracle of Jesus turning water into wine (*Haer.* 51.29.7-51.30.3). Again, Rufinus, an admirer of Origen, blasts Epiphanius for deceitfully boasting to a large crowd that he had read six thousand of Origen’s works (*Adv. Rufinum* 2.21-23). Though Epiphanius supposedly later denied this attack (cf. Jerome *Adv. Rufinum* 2.22), this denial appears to be insincere since he flaunts his knowledge of Origen’s six thousand works in his polemic against the “Origen heresy” (*Haer.* 63.9).

It is true that Epiphanius is often guilty of hyperbole, but does that mean that the entire testimony of the *Alogi* is a baseless, creative fiction, and if so how can one tell? The examples provided above are entirely sustained by Epiphanius’ testimony alone and incapable of being corroborated, but this is not the case with his testimony of the *Alogi*. Rather, Epiphanius’ testimony corresponds to aspects of a number of earlier sources. The following chapters demonstrate that the *Alogi* has textual roots and thus cannot be merely a concoction of Epiphanius’ imagination.

Finally, what about the last possibility? Did Epiphanius construct a heresy that never properly existed in an historical sense but is representative of various issues surrounding the Gospel and Apocalypse of John that arose in the early

Church? A close examination of the lengthy portrayal of the *Alogi* in conjunction with corroborating evidence from the testimonies of earlier Church Fathers points to the conclusion that Epiphanius is not referring to a person or group of people at all. Rather, the evidence suggests he is amalgamating various issues that were noted by his predecessors surrounding the Johannine literature into a single category under an appropriate heading, the “*Alogi*”. Thus, whereas the issues that Epiphanius records are real, the group itself is not. Indeed, this is not the only heresy in the *Panarion* that suffers from questionable historical grounding.

Examples of Epiphanius’ Abstract Heresies

Epiphanius possesses a certain fecundity of imagination and is fully capable of recording as fact elements that are not historically true. A close look at the *Panarion* betrays various examples of his abstract heretical groups. Perhaps the clearest example is the group known as the *Angelics* (*Haer.* 60). Epiphanius includes this sect in his *Panarion* despite the fact that he admits he knows absolutely nothing about them other than their name (*Haer.* 60.1.1). He is aware of them only through hearsay, nevertheless he is quick to denounce their views, whatever those actually might have been. As Young Kim notes, “The example of the Angelics exemplifies Epiphanius’ strategic use of heresy. The Angelics were essentially a non-existent heresy chosen to suit Epiphanius’ architecture for the *Panarion*; and in this case, the lack of detail hinted at a deliberate and free application of the notion of heresy.”¹⁷⁸

Epiphanius refutes other heresies about which he admits to knowing very little. For example, in his introduction to the sect known as the *Adamians* (*Haer.* 52) Epiphanius confesses that he has only heard of such a group. He has not found it in any treatise, nor has he encountered anyone who espouses the views he ascribes to this heresy (*Haer.* 52.1.6). He goes on to express his own doubts about the existence of such a sect (*Haer.* 52.1.9),¹⁷⁹ but concludes that even if it is just hearsay, such a group is “worth mentioning” (*Haer.* 52.1.8-9). This is seen again in his account of the *Valesians* (*Haer.* 58). Here, Epiphanius claims to have heard a lot about them,

¹⁷⁸ Kim, 19.

¹⁷⁹ εἴτε γὰρ ἔστιν ἡ τοιαύτη εἴτε μὴ ἔστι. GCS 31,2, *Epiphanius II*, 312.

but he confesses to know nothing about Vales, from whence he came, or what his teachings were (*Haer.* 58.1.1).

Likewise, Epiphanius rails against the so-called group of *Origenists* (*Haer.* 63) – a group he distinguishes from the followers of Origen (cf. *Haer.* 64) – for their sexual misconduct.¹⁸⁰ Once again, Epiphanius is the only extant source to mention this group. Epiphanius is known for his disdain for Origen, and although he claims that he does not know the origins of this title, in this case his appeal to ignorance may not be authentic. As John Dechow has argued, “All heresies, in Epiphanius’ mind, are ultimately related to the mode or content of Origen’s thought.”¹⁸¹

There are also questions that surround the historical legitimacy of other groups and their titles in the *Panarion*, such as the *Antidicomarians* (*Haer.* 78) and the *Collyridians* (*Haer.* 79). Epiphanius admits that he had to come up with his own title for the *Antidicomarians* (Proem I 4.8, 5.9). He portrays this heresy as being guilty of wrongly believing that Mary consummated her marriage to Joseph after the birth of Jesus (*Haer.* 78.1.3).¹⁸² Such a thought was unconscionable to Epiphanius, for he held that Mary remained a virgin her entire life, and thus he describes them as opponents (ἀντίδικος) of Mary. On the opposite end of the spectrum lies the heresy to which Epiphanius gives the title *Collyridians*. He accuses them of having an overzealous glorification of Mary by offering sacrifices of small loafs of bread (κολλύρις) in her name. The historical existence of this group has been called into question, particularly as “Epiphanius is the only early heresiologist to name the ‘Collyridians’, and later references seem to derive from him, rather than having independent worth.”¹⁸³ Just as the *Antidicomarians* are described as “opponents”

¹⁸⁰ Although Epiphanius claims that he is unsure of the origins of the name for this heresy, he hints it may in fact be Origen who is known as Adamantius the Author (cf. *Adv. Rufinum* 1.9; *Haer.* 64) or some other Origen. Yet in the very next heresy in the *Panarion* in which he denigrates the theological positions of the historical Origen Adamantius (*Haer.* 64), Epiphanius is again not inclined to link Origen with these “Origenists” of *Panarion* 63 outside of Origen’s supposedly similar sexual issues (cf. *Haer.* 64.3.10-13). See Dechow, *Dogma*, 128-135.

¹⁸¹ John Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen*. Patristic Monograph Series 13 (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1988), 13.

¹⁸² This appears to be the view of Victorinus of Pettau, as noted by Jerome in a letter against Helvidius (*Ad. Helvidius* 19). Helvidius apparently formulated his opinions based on a commentary on Matthew by Victorinus. Likewise, Jerome notes that Victorinus was an imitator of Origen (*Ep.* 61.2). See W. Weinrich (ed.), *Revelation: Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament XII* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), xxi, n. 43.

¹⁸³ A. Cameron, “The Cult of the Virgin in Late Antiquity: Religious Development and Myth-Making,” in *The Church and Mary. Studies in Church History* 39 (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2004), 7. See also, Ross Shepard Kraemer, “Women and Gender,” in *Oxford Handbook of Early Christian*

(ἀντίδικος) of Mary and *Collyridians* is a witty title for those who offer small loaves of bread (κολλύρις) to Mary, the *Alogi* (Ἄ-λογοι) is a clever pejorative that Epiphanius stamped onto those whom he believes rejected the Johannine Logos.¹⁸⁴

What do these examples of Epiphanius' abstract heresies reveal about the *Panarion*? In such instances, Epiphanius clearly has *some* information, but given the fact that he has no direct knowledge of these groups, he is left to fill in the blanks himself. There are three categories of information from which he claims to have composed this heresiologue: those heresies about which he learned from careful study, those about which he has only learned through hearsay, and those he has experienced firsthand (Proem II 2.4). F. Williams suggests adding an additional category, "In some cases we should add a fourth to these: historical conjecture on Epiphanius' own part."¹⁸⁵ Thus, in his endeavor to provide a list of eighty heresies (cf. Proem I 1.2-3),¹⁸⁶ Epiphanius' number of known heresies may have fallen short of the goal, and he appears to have resorted to manufacturing a few along the way, based on his limited knowledge. Such heresies are a blend of fact and fiction, where he presents the sources available to him through the filter of his imagination.

These creative elements are indicative of the overall mindset of Epiphanius, which has been explored by Young Richard Kim in his recent University of Michigan Ph.D. dissertation. His work, aptly titled "The Imagined Worlds of Epiphanius of Salamis," argues that although many scholars have mined the *Panarion* for information about heresies, they have overlooked what this treatise indicates about the frame of mind and personality of the man who wrote it. His study

Studies, eds. Susan A. Harvey and David G. Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 474. It is possible that such a group did exist, but even Geoffrey Ashe, who has offered his own attempt at reconstructing the history of this sect, admits that his portrayal belongs to the world of "historical fiction". Geoffrey Ashe, *The Virgin* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), 149-71, esp. 161. Ashe nevertheless claims his reconstruction is "strictly functional" (170). Some, however, have argued that the Collyridians are a splinter group of the Montanists. "[W]e do know that the Montanist movement carried in itself the seeds of what, under favorable conditions, could develop into the cult that Epiphanius called the Kollyridians." Stephen Benko, *The Virgin Goddess: Studies in Pagan and Christian Roots of Mariology. Studies in the History of Religions* LIX (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 193. Here Benko reiterates the connection already made in Michael P. Carroll, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary: Psychological Origins*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 45.

¹⁸⁴ "Epiphanius says that he himself coined the names, 'Alogi,' 'Antidicomarians,' and 'Collyridians,' and he may have done the same in other cases." F. Williams (ed.), *Panarion* I, XVIII.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, XIX.

¹⁸⁶ Epiphanius promises at the beginning of the *Panarion* to address eighty "heresies" that correspond with the eighty concubines mentioned in Song of Songs 6:8-9.

aims to, “reveal how much more complex, deep, misunderstood, and slightly demented, if not radically devoted, this man was.”¹⁸⁷ Kim proves this by means of exploring his role throughout the *Panarion* as a geographer, biographer and historian. In each of these areas, Kim makes a solid case for understanding Epiphanius’ tendency to perceive and construct a world on the basis of his own beliefs and convictions that sometimes stood in sharp contrast to the realities of the Roman world in which he lived.¹⁸⁸ By understanding the complexities of Epiphanius’ view of the world as seen through the *Panarion*, it is possible to gain a greater appreciation how Epiphanius “imagined and envisioned his world.”¹⁸⁹

It is inevitable that Epiphanius’ worldview would have great influence on his composition of the *Panarion*. As a fierce defender of Nicene orthodoxy, Epiphanius considered anything that failed to cohere to this standard as theologically suspect. There was no room for grey in his black and white perspective. Not only is this seen in the way he conceives of history, biography and geography as Kim has demonstrated, it is also seen in the way he portrays the heresies throughout the *Panarion*.

Epiphanius’ Conception of “Heresy”

The examples provided above in addition to all the other heresies of the *Panarion* demonstrate that Epiphanius has a unique understanding of what it means to be heretical. Exactly how Epiphanius conceives of “heresy” has been the subject of a number of studies,¹⁹⁰ which suggest that Epiphanius’ notion of what constitutes “heresy” must be understood in broad and flexible terms.

¹⁸⁷ Kim, 1. For more, see 1-25.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 21. Kim argues, for example, the division between “orthodoxy” and “heresy” determined his views of geography, where he draws boundaries around those regions that gave rise to prominent heretics and those that maintained a stronger Nicene confession. For his role as biographer, Kim highlights Epiphanius’ portrayal of the lives of Origen, Mani and Arius, where Epiphanius suggests that their heretical status was the product of their Greek education. This was to serve as a warning to other Christians about the dangers of mingling faith with Greek culture; it also emphasized Epiphanius’ connection between what Kim calls “Romanness” and orthodoxy. For his imagined history, Epiphanius’ flexible view of “heresy” gave him the ability to make determinations about pre-Christian “heresies” such as Greek philosophical schools and Jewish sects on the one hand and the “proto-orthodox” Christianity that is clearly seen in the first Adam on the other.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 26.

¹⁹⁰ For more on Epiphanius’ conception of “heresy” see Williams (ed), *Panarion*, xviii; Frances M. Young, “Did Epiphanius know what he meant by Heresy?” *Studia Patristica* 17 (1983): 199-205;

Indeed, it is impossible to derive a narrow definition of what Epiphanius means by “heresy” based on his *Panarion*. He includes “arch-heretics” such as Marcion and Cerinthus in this work alongside more abstract “heretics” such as the *Angelics* or *Adamians*. Epiphanius praises other groups such as the *Audians* (*Haer.* 70) for their piety, but nevertheless condemns them for their theological deviations from Nicene orthodoxy. Some heresies are splinter groups from within Christianity, while others such as non-Christian philosophies never claimed to exist inside the bounds of true belief.¹⁹¹ Although Epiphanius’ notion of heresy may be flexible, there is a common attribute to each of the sects he includes in his *Panarion*: all of them are guilty in one way or another of forsaking the truth. For Epiphanius truth and heresy were antonyms, and thus anyone that did not demonstrate true Christian piety or hold to the faith passed down from Christ through the apostles were heretical.¹⁹²

Some have taken Epiphanius’ broad and seemingly inconsistent notions of heresy as indicative of him simply being confused.¹⁹³ D. J. Chapman claims he was capable of any amount of “muddleheadedness.”¹⁹⁴ Other epithets describe Epiphanius as the “narrow-minded enemy of the heretics”¹⁹⁵ and “being known for garbled reporting.”¹⁹⁶ Although it is true that he is prone to confusion and that he takes certain liberties with his portrayal of some heresies, such sentiments that portray him primarily as a heresiological bumbler are not altogether warranted. Epiphanius takes proper belief and praxis seriously, and his two major works demonstrate his efforts to convince others to uphold the same standards as himself. His earlier work, the *Ancoratus*, or “well-anchored person”, is his attempt to convey the proper views of the Trinity such that, once the reader understands it, he or she too might be “anchored” in the faith. The *Panarion* is Epiphanius’ soul-saving resource for

Pourkier, 85-91; J. Rebecca Lyman, “The Making of a Heretic: The Life of Origen in Epiphanius *Panarion* 64,” *Studia Patristica* 31 (1997): 445-451; Kim, 16ff.; and Alain Le Boulluec, *La notion d’hérésie dans la littérature grecque II^e-III^e siècles*, 2 Vols. (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1985), vol. I, 18-19.

¹⁹¹ Young, 200.

¹⁹² Kim, 17-18.

¹⁹³ Young, 201.

¹⁹⁴ Chapman, 53 n.1.

¹⁹⁵ Hans von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Greek Church* (London, 1963), 152.

¹⁹⁶ William L. Petersen, *Tatian’s Diatessaron: Its Creation, Dissemination, Significance, and History in Scholarship*, *VCSupp* 25 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 39.

believers to avoid the venomous bites of the heresies.¹⁹⁷ The pastoral attention of Epiphanius in steering others along the path of right belief is often overshadowed by the severity of his rhetoric, but perhaps the former ought to be used as a lens through which to interpret the latter.

It is “out of extreme love” for the servants of God that Epiphanius wrote his *Panarion* (Proem II, 2.6). His primary concern in this work is, as he states, to provide his fellow believers with a defense of the truth and true religion (Proem I, 2.1). He admits from the beginning that there are times where his anger over the heresies will cause him to lose his temper in the way he portrays these sects, but in the same breath he also notes twice that this is due to his desire to protect the reader (Proem I, 2.3-4). As bishop, Epiphanius takes his role as the shepherd of his flock seriously, and he certainly feels the responsibility for leading other believers in distant regions. However, he does not compare with earlier heresiologists such as Justin, Irenaeus and Hippolytus, who overcame the heresies by means of sharp wit and superior intellect. Rather, he conquers his enemies often by way of insult and ridicule.

Thus, there are two fundamental ways to conceive of Epiphanius as a heresiologist. From a strictly historical perspective, his account, while valuable especially for its preservation of lost materials that he cites throughout his work, is at times questionable due to the fact that it is riddled with garbled reports, exaggerations and uncorroborated assertions.¹⁹⁸ If, however, one views this account as the product of a concerned pastor who desired to issue warnings to his fellow believers against false belief, then the *Panarion* takes on a different tone. It is a complete refutation of everything that Epiphanius deemed to be heretical, regardless of the fact that he may have taken liberties in the way he portrays certain sects. At times, this would take the form of abstract heresies such as the *Angelics*, *Adamians* and *Valesians*, about which Epiphanius has very little if any information. He sees the potential of such beliefs as a danger to the Christian fold, regardless of whether or not there existed specific groups that would have defined themselves according to the views Epiphanius links with them. Perhaps he constructed these heresies as a strategic way of achieving his total number of sects, or maybe his limited

¹⁹⁷ His other work, *De Mensuris et Ponderibus*, also exhibits well his concern for proper belief.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Photius, *Bibl.* 122.

information was enough for him to warrant their creation and inclusion in his *Panarion*. The opinions espoused by the group he calls the *Alogi* certainly earned themselves a lengthy treatment in his catalogue of heresies, but this testimony may better reflect Epiphanius' concerns as a pastor to protect the theological truth of Christianity rather than to portray the historical truth of this sect's existence.

SECTION II

The Conflation of Sources in Epiphanius' Account of the Alogi

It is a curious feature of scholarship over the past century that a good number of scholars have sought to locate the sources of Epiphanius' *Alogi* by looking *forward* in time. Many scholars have relied heavily on the commentaries of Dionysius bar Salibi, who wrote some eight hundred years after Epiphanius. An appeal to the later evidence is perhaps understandable, since it would appear that it holds the keys that would unlock the puzzle of this heretical group.¹⁹⁹ Yet it must be recognized that since the initial publication of portions of Dionysius bar Salibi's commentary on the Apocalypse by John Gwynn, a fundamental methodological shift has occurred in the way the *Alogi* have been analyzed: the earliest sources, generally held to be of utmost value to the historian, have been reinterpreted in light of much later sources.

Methodologically this is perplexing. The task of the historian is to bring together relevant information in a judicious way to determine the most accurate picture of the scrutinized subject, despite the difficulties often imposed by an absence of data that has been lost in the unfolding of history. Inversely, the historian's task is not to promote the most convenient solution, particularly when a notably facile conclusion requires that the earliest evidence be altered, misinterpreted or taken out of context. Nevertheless, the majority of scholars have taken the information provided by bar Salibi at face value, assigning it an evidentiary value equal to that of the earliest extant sources. For example, R. M. Grant includes the bar Salibi material as part of his collection of various second-century fragments.²⁰⁰ The apparatus of Holl's critical edition of the *Panarion* and Williams' recent English translation both align the bar Salibi evidence with Epiphanius' testimony as an explanatory feature.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ As Harris (47) notes, "And now for our problem; did Gaius write against the Fourth Gospel, yea or nay? The answer will come from the same quarter as before, for the Syrian Church holds the keys of all the problems."

²⁰⁰ R.M. Grant, *Second-Century Christianity: A Collection of Fragments*, 2nd edition (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 86. Grant's introduction to the section entitled "Gaius on New Testament Books" is telling: "Eusebius quotes fragments of Gaius of Rome...on Christian antiquities but not his criticism of the Gospel and Apocalypse of John, for which we have to rely on the account of the 'Alogi' by Epiphanius and on the twelfth-century commentary by Dionysius Bar Salibi" (83-4).

²⁰¹ GCS 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 251; Williams (trans.), *Panarion: Books II and III*, 28, n. 9.

J. R. Harris juxtaposes Epiphanius' testimony with the bar Salibi commentaries and uses the latter as an interpretive device for the former.²⁰² The same is true of T. H. Robinson.²⁰³ Even in his collection of documents from the early Church, J. Stevenson includes a portion of bar Salibi's commentary as indicative of "yet another controversy at Rome in the early third century."²⁰⁴

Although it is true that similarities in the contents of these writings would naturally incline one to place them in the same pool of evidence, few have raised serious questions about the legitimacy of the bar Salibi evidence to effectively determine how one is to understand a history that came some thousand years earlier. The testimony of bar Salibi has become the ink in the water of the evidence pertaining to the *Alogi*: all the early evidence now bears its mark and is interpreted in light of it.

This raises an important question. Has the original context of the *Alogi* become lost in this process? If the bar Salibi evidence is set aside as the mediating factor in the pool of evidence and the focus is placed on the writings of the earlier Church Fathers – sources that are very familiar to Epiphanius throughout his *Panarion* – one finds that these sources hold a set of keys themselves, which unlock a very different explanation of the *Alogi*.

There are, therefore, two methods for establishing the sources of Epiphanius' *Alogi*. The first is exemplified in the work of J. D. Smith, Jr., who, using the bar Salibi commentaries as a starting point, has attempted to map out what he believes to be the content of works that no longer exist: Hippolytus' *Defense of the Gospel of John and Revelation* and Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus*.²⁰⁵ These works, he argues, are not only the sources of information for bar Salibi and Epiphanius but, "*all later reflections*" on the Johannine controversy, and they can be seen through the testimony of bar Salibi.²⁰⁶ This is the most notable assumption that Smith brings to

²⁰² Harris, 52-3.

²⁰³ Robinson, 494.

²⁰⁴ J. Stevenson (ed.), *A New Eusebius: Documents illustrating the history of the Church to AD 337*. Revised by W. H. C. Frend (London: SPCK, 1987), 153.

²⁰⁵ See Smith, "Gaius," 387ff. The *Dialogue with Proclus* is lost except for that which has survived in Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica* (HE 2.25.7, 3.28.2, 3.31.4, cf. 6.20.3). For Smith's analysis of the *Dialogue with Proclus* see 268-311, for Hippolytus' lost *Defense* see 336-418.

²⁰⁶ Smith, "Gaius", 425-6; emphasis that of Smith.

his analysis of the *Alogi*: bar Salibi used a lost work of Hippolytus against Gaius for his information, and thus his testimony is an accurate reflection of this lost work and it can be compared to Epiphanius' account of the *Alogi*. Therefore, on the basis of examining the later evidence first, Smith arrives at a number of conclusions before his examination of Epiphanius' testimony ever takes place.²⁰⁷ Yet, I have already shown in Section I that Epiphanius' reliance upon a lost Hippolytan work is extremely volatile.

Inevitably, Smith's methodology has aligned the evidence in such a way that the *Alogi* has been reduced to a single individual, Gaius of Rome. However, his analysis amounts to a forfeiture in recognizing the elements of Epiphanius' testimony that are clearly drawn from earlier extant sources that do not require the bar Salibi commentaries to act as an intermediary. It is also not compulsory that one assume that Epiphanius garnered all his information from a lost work of Hippolytus.

In contrast to the methodology of Smith and others, the focus of this section is concerned with establishing Epiphanius' sources for his *Alogi* by taking a closer look at Epiphanius' testimony and its relationship to the early extant evidence. By giving priority to the earliest evidence, a very different picture of the *Alogi* emerges – one in which the so-called *Alogi* is seen to be much broader in scope than has been realized.

Indeed, the specific criticisms of the *Alogi* against the Johannine literature are not Epiphanius' only concern; rather a close read of his testimony shows that he is engaged in a multilateral attack against a number of different heretics who discredited the four-fold Gospel. Thus, this section begins with an examination of the historical context concerning the various issues, concerns and criticisms

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 222-55. Elsewhere, Smith has this to say on the issue of determining Epiphanius' sources for the objections to the Gospel of John: "Our primary objective in this section is to examine the structure and content of Epiphanius' refutation and defense of the Fourth Gospel in order to determine how valuable it is in reconstructing Hippolytus' refutations in the *Defense* against Gaius and his solutions for harmonizing the contradictions alleged against the Gospel of John." He goes on to say, "Determining the arguments contained in Epiphanius' refutations which derive from Hippolytus as his primary source is especially difficult. Epiphanius is essentially dependent on Hippolytus' *Defense* for the content and form of the objections and also for the content of the refutations which answers directly to the objections and for the general form of the refutations." (381). Smith admits other influences as well (e.g. Ephraem the Syrian in *Haer.* 51.22.7, the *Syriac Didaskalia* in *Haer.* 51.26-27, as well as the criticisms of the Greek Philosophers in *Haer.* 51.8-9), but these are "unrelated discussions" (382).

surrounding the four Gospels with which Epiphanius is engaged throughout his account of the *Alogi*. I demonstrate that Epiphanius includes other heretics such as the Ebionites, Valentinians, Celsus and Porphyry in the category of the *Alogi*, despite the fact that their criticisms and opinions do not relate directly to the Gospel or Apocalypse of John. Thus, although he bills the so-called *Alogi* as opponents of the Johannine literature, it is clear throughout his testimony that Epiphanius' concerns are much broader and more variegated than simply rebutting anti-Johannine rhetoric.

This is further evidenced as the search for Epiphanius' sources shifts to a more specific examination of how he incorporated the testimonies of a number of different Church Fathers into his testimony. Most notably, there are various features of the writings of his predecessors such as Papias, Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius and Dionysius of Alexandria throughout his account of the *Alogi*. The testimonies of these writers are like pieces of a puzzle that Epiphanius has put together to create his own, unique portrait of the *Alogi*. As Epiphanius winds and twists his way through his account of the *Alogi*, one is able to discern where he utilizes the testimonies of his predecessors as he pieces together both the criticisms of the so-called *Alogi* as well as his responses to these accusations. Once Epiphanius' testimony is examined in light of the earlier sources, it becomes clear that although his primary concern is establishing and protecting the legitimacy of the Gospel of John as part of the Gospel canon, there is much more to his account of the *Alogi* than has been realized.

Because there is a clear division in Epiphanius' testimony regarding the accusations against the Gospel of John and those against the Apocalypse, I shall divide the present section accordingly. Below, I provide the specific objections of the so-called *Alogi* against the Gospel of John. The following chapters will explore the breadth of Epiphanius' concerns as well as the primary sources from which he draws his information for these criticisms and his defense of the Gospel of John. The objections to the Apocalypse of John are provided in Chapter 7, where I discuss the likely source(s) for his these accusations.

The Objections to the Gospel of John

Epiphanius presents two primary arguments of the so-called *Alogi* against the Gospel of John. The first objection concerns the fact that the Gospel of John does not record the forty-day temptation, whereas the Synoptics do. This objection is divided into two parts (*Haer.* 51.4.5-10; 51.17.11-18.6). The second objection to the Gospel of John is much more succinct and concerns the discrepancy in the number of Passovers that John record as compared to the Synoptics (*Haer.* 51.22.1).

Objection 1

For they say against themselves – I do not say against the truth – that [John’s] books do not agree (οὐ συμφωνεῖ) with the other apostles’. And now they believe they can attack the holy and inspired teachings. ‘And what did he say?’ he asserts (φησὶν). ‘In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the word was God.’ And that, ‘The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we knew his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And immediately, ‘John bore witness and cried, saying, “This is the one of whom I was telling you.”’ And that ‘This is the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.’

And next [John] says, ‘And those that heard him said, “Rabbi, where do you dwell?”’ and in the same breath he says, ‘in the morning Jesus wanted to go into Galilee and found Philip and Jesus said to him, “Follow me.”’ And after a little while he says, ‘And after three days there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the wedding supper, and his mother was there.’ But the other evangelists say that he spent forty days in the wilderness being tempted by the devil, and then returned to choose his disciples. And they [the *Alogi*] have not seen that each evangelist has taken care to say what the others had said, in agreement with them, while at the same time revealing what each had not proclaimed, but had neglected to disclose. For the will was not their own: but the sequence (ἀκολουθία) and teachings came from the Holy Spirit. If these opponents attack these writings [of John], they must learn that the other three of these [Gospels] did not begin in the same way (*Haer.* 51.4.5-12a).²⁰⁸

Epiphanius then provides a lengthy rebuttal to this initial criticism before picking up the second half of this first objection, which reads:

Not understanding the power of the Gospels they say, ‘Why have the other evangelists said that Jesus fled from before Herod to Egypt, and after the flight he came back and remained in Nazareth; then, after receiving the baptism, went up into the wilderness, and returned after these things, and after his return began to preach? But the Gospel which was issued under John’s name lies,’ they say (φασί). ‘For, after it says that “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” and a few other things, immediately it says that there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee (*Haer.* 51.17.11-18.1).’²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ GCS 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 251-2.

²⁰⁹ GCS 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 274-5.

But they say that the Gospel according to John is non-canonical (ἀδιόθετον) because it did not mention these things – I am speaking about the events of the forty-day temptation – and they do not deem it worthy of being accepted, since they are deceived about everything and mentally blind (*Haer.* 51.18.6).²¹⁰

Objection 2

But they accuse the holy evangelist again, more so the Gospel itself, because, he says (φησὶν), ‘John said that the Savior kept two Passovers over a period of two years, but the other evangelists describe one Passover’ (*Haer.* 51.22.1).²¹¹

²¹⁰ *GCS 31,2 Epiphanius II*, 275-6.

²¹¹ *GCS 31,2 Epiphanius II*, 283.

CHAPTER THREE

The Broader Historical Context of the Alogi

In order to fully understand Epiphanius' record of the *Alogi* it is necessary to consider the historical context from which these objections arose. Given the chronology of *Panarion*, Epiphanius places this group around the end of the second century or the beginning of the third, a particularly fertile time for various heterodox theologies and orthodox counter-polemics. As such, scholarly estimations have suggested that the *Alogi* emerged as a renegade orthodox group that rejected the Johannine literature in an attempt to eradicate a certain form of heresy, most notably either Montanism or Gnosticism (or both). However, Epiphanius provides no clear indication that the *Alogi* were engaged in a theological or textual battle with either of these "heresies". Although it is true that Epiphanius' primary accusation against the *Alogi* is their rejection of the Johannine literature, a close reading of this testimony suggests that his concerns are much broader. It is clear, though often overlooked, that in the midst of his account of the *Alogi* Epiphanius is engaged in a multilateral attack against a number of different arguments concerning the integrity and authenticity of the four-fold Gospel canon.

3.1 The Problem of Four Gospels

Epiphanius devotes more than ninety per cent of his testimony of the *Alogi* to the issue of the compatibility of the Gospels. His chronological placement of the *Alogi* fits squarely within the second-century church's efforts to make sense of the fact that there were four different written Gospel accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus. The problem of this aporia is evident in a number of ways. For one thing, the mere fact that there exist four different Gospel accounts does not in itself point to the credibility of a singular Gospel message. Is one Gospel more authoritative than the others? Further complicating matters is the fact that the collective biographical accounts of Jesus' life and ministry in these four Gospels are at times varying in the presentation of content or chronology. This raises further questions of reliability: which Gospel preserves the most authentic account? The differences between the Gospels are particularly evident when one juxtaposes the broadly similar chronology of the Synoptics Gospel with the different framework of John. The differences in the

contours of the Synoptics are far less pronounced than the apparent discrepancies that are found when the Fourth Gospel is added to the mix. And here is where one finds the familiar territory of the objections to the Gospel of John not only by the so-called *Alogi*, but also for many others in the second-century.

Objections to the Gospel of John such as those espoused by *Alogi* were in no way new to the history of the early church at the time that Epiphanius penned his *Panarion*. Various critics highlighted the differences between the Gospels in order to call their reliability into question. Moreover, Epiphanius' response in which he appeals for the necessity of a four-fold Gospel canon is far from groundbreaking. Various responses to Gospel criticisms had been proffered by numerous Church Fathers prior to Epiphanius. The entire account of the *Alogi* and their criticisms of the Gospel of John are emblematic of a period of time from the second century onward in which the four-fold Gospel was indeed an issue recognized by those within and outside the Church. Although the scope of the *Alogi*'s official objections is limited to the Gospel of John, it is important not to miss the fact that Epiphanius makes it clear that his response to these criticisms is nothing less than his own apology for the necessity of the four-fold Gospel canon – a defence that originates over two centuries earlier.

Upon reading through his account of the *Alogi* the issue surrounding the compatibility of the four Gospels is clear, but what is not so apparent is any singular, identifiable source of opposition. The various heresiologues of the early Church provide no individual heretical category in which those who criticized the four Gospels could be refuted and in which these criticisms could be addressed. To be sure, various works such as Origen's *Contra Celsum* and Eusebius' *Gospel Questions and Answers* address the issues raised by critics of Christianity and its textual tradition, but the opponents and their attacks on the Gospels were too variegated to be identified in one group. Epiphanius is the first to coalesce what he perceives to be the various arguments against all four Gospels, especially the Gospel of John, into one heretical category. To gain a clearer understanding of this, it is important to recall the historical context of the reception of the Four Gospels in the second and third centuries, both positively and negatively

3.2 Criticisms of the Four-Fold Gospel as Addressed by Epiphanius

Beginning in the second century, the four-fold Gospel was met with questions, criticism and ridicule from opponents of Christianity. It was also an area of concern within the Church. What emerged at first as criticisms against the plurality and discrepancies of the Synoptic Gospels was eventually broadened to include attacks on the very divergent portrayal of the life of Jesus recorded in the Johannine Gospel in comparison to that of the Synoptics. In addition to the criticisms of the *Alogi* against John's Gospel, Epiphanius records and responds to other objections to all four Gospels from various groups; and he devotes a substantial amount of his testimony to refuting them. These views are on par with those of the so-called *Alogi* and it is interesting that Epiphanius does not draw a strong distinction between other critics of the Gospels and the *Alogi*. In particular, Epiphanius goes to great lengths to refute the criticisms of Cerinthus and the Ebionites. He also refutes the objection from three other critics, Porphyry, Celsus and Philosabbatius.

Cerinthus and the Ebionites

There were some who rejected the four-fold Gospel by means of only recognizing one Gospel, which was then used to support a wayward theology. One such category of people to which Epiphanius often refers in his discussion of the *Alogi* is that comprised of Cerinthus and the Ebionites, who chose only to accept the Gospel of Matthew (*Haer.* 30.3.7; cf. *AH* 1.26.2, 3.11.7; *HE* 3.27.4). According to Irenaeus (*AH* 1.26.2), both Cerinthus and the Ebionites denied the virgin birth, arguing that Jesus was the product of natural generation of Mary and Joseph. Jesus was therefore fleshly and capable of suffering, but he was endowed with the spiritual "Christ" that descended upon him at his baptism in the form of a dove. Because of its impassibility, this spiritual "Christ" departed from Jesus just prior to his Passion, leaving the fleshly Jesus to suffer on the cross.

Epiphanius has plenty to say against these groups. References and rebuttals to the adoptionistic perspective of Cerinthus and the Ebionites are found in the introduction to the *Alogi* (*Haer.* 51.2.3-4, 51.4.1-2), in his discussions of the Gospel of Matthew (*Haer.* 51.6.6-9), Mark (*Haer.* 51.6.12-14), and Luke (*Haer.* 51.7.2-5, 51.10.4-51.11.3, 51.20.4). Moreover, in his discussion of the baptism and temptation of Jesus, Epiphanius clearly singles out those who hold to this adoptionistic

Christology. He appeals to Lk. 2:49 in order to refute “the word of those who say that he became the Son of God at the time of his baptism, when the dove – which they say is Christ – came upon him” (*Haer.* 51.20.5).

According to Epiphanius, the theological errors of Cerinthus and the Ebionites persisted even though the Synoptic Gospels did not preach such a position (*Haer.* 51.11.5-12.1), so the Holy Spirit compelled John to write his Gospel to correct their Christological views (*Haer.* 51.12.2-8, 51.19.3-5, 51.20.3; cf. 51.2.3-4; 51.4.1). Although *Haer.* 51 is technically a refutation of the *Alogi*, throughout his testimony Epiphanius is constantly engaged in refuting Cerinthus and the Ebionites. Why does he constantly refer back to these groups? Is Epiphanius simply losing track of the issue at hand – something he is known to do – or does this point to the fact that the scope of the identity of the *Alogi* is broader than originally thought? To clarify this, we turn to another example.

Celsus, Porphyry and Philosabbatius

In addition to his recurring refutation of Cerinthus and the Ebionites, Epiphanius dedicates a portion of his account of the *Alogi* to another group of critics. He states that the Greek philosophers Porphyry, Celsus and Philosabbatius tried to refute the Gospels because they did not understand the Gospel message as it was given through the Holy Spirit (*Haer.* 51.8.1). The premise of these objectors, as with the *Alogi*, is that the Gospels are untrustworthy because of the contradictions that exist between them.²¹² This is how Epiphanius relays their criticism:

And so some other Greek philosophers, I mean Porphyry and Celsus and Philosabbatius, who is a dreadful, deceitful snake from the Jews, accuse the facts of the Gospels through the overthrow of the holy apostles; being natural and fleshly, leading their war according to the flesh and, being powerless, they cannot please God; and they have not understood that which is <said> by the Spirit.

For each <of them>, striking against the words of the truth because of the blindness of their ignorance, in their attacks on this say: ‘How is it possible that the day of his birth in Bethlehem has a circumcision eight days later, and forty days after a journey to Jerusalem and the things Simon and Anna did for him, when on the night he was born it says an angel appeared to him, after the magi had come to worship him and opened the bags and offered him gifts? As it says, “An angel appeared to him saying, ‘Get up, take your wife and the child, and go to Egypt, because Herod is looking for the life of the

²¹² On the subject of Gospel contradictions in the early church, see esp. the works of H. Merkel, *Widersprüche Zwischen Den Evangelien: Ihre polemische und apologetische Behandlung in der Alten Kirche bis zu Augustin*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum N.T. 13 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1971); eadem, *Die Pluralität der Evangelien* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1978).

child.’” (Mt. 2:13) If he was taken to Egypt on the night he was born, and was there until Herod died, how is it possible that he remained [in Bethlehem] for eight days and be circumcised? Or how is it possible after forty days,²¹³ as it is found in Luke, who is lying?’ They say this blasphemously against each of their own heads, because he says, ‘On the fortieth day they brought him to Jerusalem and <returned> into Nazareth.’ (cf. Lk. 2:22, 39; *Haer.* 51.8.1-4).²¹⁴

Allen Brent has suggested that Porphyry, Celsus and Philosabbatius are the only named members of the *Alogi*.²¹⁵ He is partially correct; Epiphanius includes them as members of the *Alogi*, but there are certainly others that are included as well.

It is interesting that Celsus and Porphyry were not contemporaries²¹⁶ and that the objection Epiphanius attributes to these critics has nothing to do with the Johannine literature, yet Epiphanius still includes them in his account of the *Alogi*. If the *Alogi* were an historical group that opposed the Johannine literature, why does Epiphanius include these figures that were active in different centuries and whose criticism has nothing to do with either the Gospel or Apocalypse of John? It is because the scope of Epiphanius’ *Alogi* is much broader than merely those who willingly criticized the Johannine corpus. A closer look at these three figures will further substantiate this point.

Celsus was a philosopher and outspoken critic of Christianity and the earliest opponent whose work has survived (at least in part). Fragments of Celsus’ *The True Doctrine* (ἀληθὴς λόγος), written between 177-180,²¹⁷ are preserved in the counter polemic of Origen’s *Contra Celsum*, written some seventy years later.²¹⁸ It is apparent from Celsus’ attacks that he is familiar with the Gospels and finds their lack of overall coherence to be a major strike against the validity of Christianity. For Celsus, Christianity was a threat to the Hellenistic religious culture and the “ancient tradition” to which he adhered. Among other scurrilous accusations, he also argued

²¹³ Clearly implying Luke’s account of Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem.

²¹⁴ *GSC* 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 258.

²¹⁵ “He (Epiphanius) does not name any of the ἄλογοι, with the exception of Porphyry, Celsus, and Philosabbatius, who are rightly described as τινες ἄλλοι ἐξ Ἑλλήνων φιλοσόφων who criticised all the Gospels. Brent, *Hippolytus*, 143.

²¹⁶ Philosabbatius is unknown apart from this notice of Epiphanius.

²¹⁷ For this date I follow the analysis of H. Chadwick (ed., trans.) *Contra Celsum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), xxviii. Merkel (*Widersprüche*, 9) suggests a date around 178 AD. Hengel (*Johannine Question*, 6) thinks it could date as early as 160.

²¹⁸ Cf. Chadwick, *Contra Celsum*, xiv-xv; Merkel, *Widersprüche*, 9.

that it was an unfounded secret society that represented a real threat to the Roman Empire.

Celsus' arguments against Jesus as a divine figure and Christianity in general are articulated through a fictitious Jewish character he employs as his spokesperson (*C. Cels* Pref. 6; 1.28).²¹⁹ For Celsus the truth of Jesus is not that which is portrayed in the Gospels, for their stories are inventions (*C. Cels.* 2.13, 26). Origen records a specific objection to the Gospels in this way: "After this he (Celsus, or his Jew) says that *some believers, as though from a drinking bout, go so far as to oppose themselves and alter the original text of the gospel three or four or several times over, and they change its character to enable them to deny difficulties in face of criticism*" (*C. Cels.* 2.27).²²⁰

The exact meaning of Celsus' charge here is unclear. Origen's rebuttal to this criticism indicates that he believed Celsus to be referring to the alterations of the Gospel by the Marcionites, Valentinians and the followers of Lucan. As Chadwick notes, Origen may have been correct, but he also leaves the door open for what many have considered to be a reference to the canonical four.²²¹ If Celsus did intend the four Gospels as a number of scholars have suggested,²²² his criticism would indicate he believed there to be one original Gospel upon which the four derived their information. One could also infer that one of the four was the Gospel of John because of a number of references in his work point to the fact that he knows the

²¹⁹ Celsus' presentation of a Jewish mouthpiece for his criticisms may be in response to Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*. Some have pointed to the fact that Celsus' *True Doctrine* may be in response to Justin's doctrine of the Logos. See D. Rokéah, *Justin Martyr and the Jews* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 5, n. 11.

²²⁰ Translation from Chadwick (ed., trans.) *Contra Celsum*, 90.

²²¹ Chadwick, *Contra Celsum*, 90, n.2. He also provides the parenthetical notice that "(it is just conceivable that the phrase shows knowledge of those who rejected St John)." Cf. Merkel, *Widersprüche*, 11.

²²² See Hengel, *Four Gospels*, 22-3; Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 310; Stanton, "Fourfold Gospel," 325; Tj. Baarda, "Διαφωνία – Συμφωνία, Factors in the Harmonization of the Gospels *Especially in the Diatessaron of Tatian*," in *Essays on the Diatessaron* (Kampen, The Netherlands: Pharos, 1994), originally published in W.L. Petersen (Ed), *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Origins, Recensions, Text and Transmission*. (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 133-54; R.M. Grant, *The Earliest Lives of Jesus* (London: SPCK, 1961), 59-60; N. Perrin "The Diatessaron and the Second-Century Reception of the Gospel of John," in *The Legacy of John: Second-Century Reception of the Fourth Gospel*, ed. Tuomas Rasimus SNT 132 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 315.

Fourth Gospel, suggesting that it may have already been in a place of authority in the early church at the time of Celsus' critique.²²³

A century after the *True Doctrine*, Celsus' criticisms against Christianity and its textual foundations had become the platform of a voluminous work by Porphyry of Tyre, *Against the Christians* (κατὰ Χριστιανῶν). Due to the fact that his fifteen books were burned by order of Theodosius II and Valentinian III, the extant material survives only in a fragmentary nature from quotations extracted from later sources.²²⁴ The common view of the date of this work places it around 270 A.D., although Timothy Barnes has pointed out that this dating relies on a "fragile chain of deduction", and the work more properly belongs around the early years of the fourth century.²²⁵ In either case it would not be long before Porphyry's work prompted a swift response by various ecclesiastical Fathers.

Jerome records that the attacks of Porphyry were met with a sustained and multilateral counterattack by Methodius, Eusebius and Apollinaris. He states that Methodius wrote a response of around ten thousand lines – a meagre rebuttal when compared to Eusebius' twenty five books "Against Porphyry" and Apollinaris' thirty (*Ep. 70.3 Ad Magnum*). Porphyry was certainly the beneficiary of the work of Celsus, who noted apparent contradictions between the beginnings of the Gospels. Yet Porphyry shows a greater meticulousness in respect to his criticisms of Christian Scripture regarding the contradictions and discrepancies he sees in Christian literature. Many of his surviving arguments have a more religious than philosophical or political emphasis.²²⁶ Nevertheless, a common thread of both these critics was their attempt to discredit Christian texts such as the Gospels in order to nullify the validity of the Christian faith.

²²³ On this see Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 309-11; Hengel, *Johannine Question*, 6, n. 23.

²²⁴ The lion's share of our textual information of Porphyry's work comes from Jerome and Macarius. For a brief account of the compilations of these fragments, see T. D. Barnes, "Porphyry *Against the Christians*: Date and the Attribution of Fragments," *JTS* ns. 24 (1973), 424-30; A.B. Hulén, *Porphyry's Work Against the Christians: An Interpretation*, Yale Studies in Religion 1 (Scottsdale, PA: Mennonite Press, 1933); Merkel, *Widersprüche*, 13-18. Harnack includes this criticism recorded by Epiphanius as Fragment 15 in his catalogue of Porphyry's fragments. A. von Harnack, *Porphyrius "Gegen die Christen"* 15 *Bücher: Zeugnisse, Fragmente, und Referate, Abhandlungen der königlichen preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil-hist. Klasse* (Berlin, 1916), 49.

²²⁵ Barnes, "Porphyry," 424-442.

²²⁶ See J.W. Hargis, *Against the Christians: The Rise of Early Anti-Christian Polemic*, Patristic Studies Vol. 1 (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 67ff.

The only extant information of the Jewish critic Philosabbatius is recorded here by Epiphanius. No other extant writing appears to mention such a figure. Nevertheless, Epiphanius includes him along with Celsus and Porphyry as one who shared in a common criticism against the Gospels.

Because of the absence of original works by these critics, it is difficult to know for certain what constituted Epiphanius' source(s) of this criticism. It is possible that Epiphanius may only have had access to one final work by Porphyry in which Celsus and Philosabbatius are also associated with this criticism, or he could have connected the dots to align these three with this particular criticism from any number of sources – particularly if he had the numerous ecclesiastical rebuttals of these critics at his disposal.²²⁷ However, I shall argue in Chapter 6 that Eusebius' work, *Gospel Questions and Answers*, is the ultimate source of Epiphanius' information, not an independent work by one of these critics.

The Valentinians

Epiphanius also devotes a sizeable portion of his account of the *Alogi* to the refutation of the Valentinian Gnostics (*Haer.* 51.23.1-28.3). He notes that they believed that Jesus lived for thirty years, which they then used to support their belief in thirty divine Aeons, or first principles. In response to this error, Epiphanius meticulously goes through the list of consulships in order to prove that Jesus actually suffered death in his thirty-third year in order to disprove their erroneous account (*Haer.* 51.22.24-23.2). However, as with the criticism of Porphyry, Celsus and Philosabbatius, this excursus has no direct relevance to the criticisms of the *Alogi*.

He does not accuse the Valentinians of criticizing the four Gospels, nor does he insinuate that the *Alogi* had anything to do with this Gnostic group. Rather, in his attempt to rebut the second objection of the so-called *Alogi* concerning the number of Passovers Jesus observed during his ministry, Epiphanius launches into a long exposition on the chronology of the life of Christ (*Haer.* 51.22.1-30), beginning with the year of his birth and concluding with the year of his death. By the time he reaches the end of this chronological study he has shifted his focus from a refutation

²²⁷ Cf. John G. Cook, *The Interpretation of the New Testament in Greco-Roman Paganism, Studien und Texte zu Antike Christentum* 3 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 137-8.

of the criticisms of the *Alogi* against the Gospel of John to his dismissal of the views of the Valentinians (cf. *Haer.* 51.28.3-4).

Although he does not explicitly accuse the Valentinians of criticizing the compatibility of the Gospels, it is clear that Epiphanius finds them guilty of this crime. He states that if they had paid attention to the Gospel of Luke (3:23), when it states that Jesus began his ministry when he was about to be thirty years old, then they would have known that their views were wrong (*Haer.* 51.24.6). They also failed to understand what was meant by the “acceptable year of the Lord”. If they had read the other Gospels (esp. Lk. 4:18-19), they would have known it was not the last year of Jesus’ life, but rather “a year without opposition” at the beginning of his ministry (*Haer.* 51.25.1, 51.27.4, 51.28.2). Thus, although there is no direct connection between the Valentinians and the *Alogi*, Epiphanius includes this argument because they too are guilty of not understanding and appropriating the authority of all four Gospels.

Other Criticisms of the Gospels

There were, of course, other critics of early Christianity that employed much the same form of criticism as those noted by Epiphanius. Although Epiphanius does not mention these other critics in his account of the *Alogi*, they are nevertheless part of the historical context that demonstrates the broad concerns over the four-fold Gospel in the lead-up to the *Panarion*. For example, in the *Dialogue of Adamantius* 1.7 one can find criticisms put forward by the later Marcionites that the Gospels are far from harmonious. In Epiphanius’ own day, Julian the Apostate, the last Roman emperor of the Constantinian dynasty in the fourth century, was well known for his own condemnation of Christianity by means of pointing out in particular the chronological discrepancies of the Gospels.²²⁸ Similar arguments come from Hierocles of Bithynia in the early fourth century (Eusebius, *Contra Hieroclem*).²²⁹ Thus, the issues surrounding the four Gospels that originated in the second-century continued well into the time of Epiphanius and after.

²²⁸ Cf. Merkel, *Widersprüche*, 19-23.

²²⁹ Ibid., 18-19. See also T.D. Barnes, “Sossianus Hierocles and the Antecedents of the ‘Great Persecution’,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 80 (1976): 239-52. Barnes follows Harnack in dating this work some time before 303 A.D.

Indeed, one can see throughout various testimonies of the early Fathers that the problem of the one Gospel message articulated in four separate Gospels, which differ at various points in content and form, was a self-evident issue that required attention. And although Epiphanius' account of the *Alogi* is billed as his response to criticisms against the Johannine Gospel and Apocalypse, the majority of his comments reflect his broader concerns regarding the compatibility and integrity of the four-fold Gospel. His aim, therefore, is not only to defend the Gospel of John, but the entire Gospel canon.

3.3 Attempts at a Solution and the "Orthodox" Response

There were, in effect, three methods of responding to the issues surrounding the various difficulties of a four-fold Gospel.²³⁰ First there were attempts to reduce the number of Gospels. For example, Marcion opted for only one Gospel – abandoning all but a redacted, Paulinized form of Luke. Despite the swift denunciation by the early Church Fathers against Marcion and his gospel, it did not eradicate the desire for a singular Gospel text. It merely took a different tack, from radical reduction to synthesis.

Here one finds Tatian, who created his *Diatessaron* (διὰ τεσσάρων; *HE* 4.29.6; *Haer.* 46.1.8-9) as a singular harmony of the Four. One can only speculate as to his motivation. Perhaps it was a reaction to Marcion's gospel,²³¹ or in response to the apparent discrepancies between the four.²³² Perhaps it was intended for liturgical purposes.²³³ Some have argued that Justin Martyr, at one time Tatian's mentor, probably paved the way for Tatian's work with his own harmonized version of at least Matthew, Mark, and Luke (and probably John).²³⁴ Provided this is true, either

²³⁰ Cf. Campenhausen, *Formation*, 170-1.

²³¹ Ibid., 175; cf. Perrin, "Diatessaron," 311.

²³² Baarda, ΔΙΑΦΩΝΙΑ, 25.

²³³ The *Diatessaron* was certainly used for liturgical purposes in the East in the fourth century where the *Doctrine of Addai* notes that Christians assembled to read the Old and New Testaments and the *Diatessaron*. See G. Phillips (ed.), *The Doctrine of Addai the Apostle* (London: Trübner and Co., 1876), fol. 23a, 34, cited in Carmel McCarthy (ed.), *Saint Ephrem's Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron: An English Translation of Chester Beatty Syriac MS 709 with Introduction and Notes*. Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement 2. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 5-6.

²³⁴ E.g. H. Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament: History and Literature of Early Christianity* Vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 342-3, though Koester excludes the Gospel of John in Justin's harmony; Campenhausen, *Formation*, 174; Petersen, 27-9; cf. J.R. Harris, *The Diatessaron of*

Tatian used Justin's harmony, or it is possible that both were reliant on the same, earlier, harmonized gospel form.²³⁵

Subsequent to Tatian's work there were other attempts at Gospel harmonization. We know from Jerome (*Ep. ad Algasiam* 121.6) that Theophilus "joined together in one work the words of the four Gospels."²³⁶ Another example is found in Ammonius of Alexandria, whom Eusebius says composed his own "*Diatessaron*" (διὰ τεσσάρων; *Ep. ad Carpianum* 1).²³⁷ The *Gospel According to the Ebionites*, from which Epiphanius quotes in his rebuttal of the group by the same name (cf. *Haer.* 30.13.1-14.5), may also fall into the category of a Synoptic harmony.²³⁸ The pull towards a singular harmonized Gospel was a logical, attractive and, one might argue, natural solution to the problem of the Gospel disharmony. For others, it was misguided. The textual creation of a singular *Diatessaron* came at a cost that was deemed unacceptable to others within the early church. Although based on "authentic" texts, such harmonies were new, artificial constructions that perhaps stood too close in proximity to the forgeries of Marcion and the Valentinian

Tatian: A Preliminary Study (London: C.J. Clay and Sons, 1890), 54; Hengel, *Four Gospels*, 20. Whether or not Justin knew the Gospel of John and employed it is the subject of much scrutiny. Regarding the question of why no clear citations of the Fourth Gospel are found in Justin's writings, Hillmer (70-80) argued, "The best explanation is probably that Justin refused to use John because it was popular among the Valentinians in Rome...while Tatian, who shows much more sympathy for the teachings of these gnostics, could readily accept and use this gospel." However, more than a century ago E. Abbot made a compelling case (now largely forgotten) for Justin's knowledge of (and use of) the Fourth Gospel. See E. Abbot, "The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel: External Evidences," in *The Fourth Gospel and its Authorship* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1892), 16-76. Also, more recent investigations have called into question the general belief that Justin was at best reticent of the Fourth Gospel. The analysis of Stanton ("Fourfold Gospel," 330-1) is particularly compelling, especially his argument that Justin's *Dial.* 103.8 demonstrates that he accepts at least four Gospels, and due to the fact that there is no clear evidence he accepted any other gospels than the canonical four, we may presume he had in mind Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. He thinks Justin may have collected and harmonized clusters of the sayings of Jesus for catechetical purposes, but *not* as a replacement for the four-fold Gospel (332). Others who agree that Justin knew the Fourth Gospel include, C.E. Hill, "Was John's Gospel among Justin's *Apostolic Memoirs*," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, eds. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 88-94; Perrin, "*Diatessaron*," 313-14; Hengel, *Johannine Question*, 13.

²³⁵ Harris titled this hypothesized text "Pre-Tatian" and suggested this was the source of both Justin and Tatian. See Harris, *Diatessaron*, 54-56. See also Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 28.

²³⁶ "Theophilus Antiochenae...qui quattuor evangelistarum in unum opus dicta compingens..." Text in J. Labourt (ed.), *Saint Jérôme, Lettres*, tome VII (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1961), 30.

²³⁷ See Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 32-4, 37-8. The Greek text of *Eusebii Epistula ad Carpianum et Canones I-X* is conveniently located in Nestle-Aland's *Novum Testamentum Graece* ed. xxvii (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft), 84-5.

²³⁸ See Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 29-31.

Gospel of Truth. It was, by nature of its redacted form, a Gospel that reflected the work of the editor more than the apostolic foundations of the original Gospel texts.

Thirdly, there were those who argued that all four Gospels are inspired accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus, which carry apostolic authority; therefore all four should be accepted. Irenaeus is the first extant witness to explicitly state the necessity of a four-fold Gospel canon. As he famously argued, there can be no more, no fewer than these four (*AH* 3.11.8-9). His argument for accepting all four Gospels was carried forward and enhanced by other prominent writers in the early church such as Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea, Augustine and others.

Some scholars, most notably Hans von Campenhausen and J. Knox, have argued that the emergence of arguments for a four-fold Gospel was a reactionary position in order to combat the views of Marcion and the Valentinians.²³⁹ G. M. Hahneman agrees, arguing that Irenaeus' well-known notice, "must have been something of an innovation, for if a Fourfold Gospel had been established and generally acknowledged, then Irenaeus would not have offered such a tortured insistence on its numerical legitimacy."²⁴⁰ Furthermore, E. Pagels argues that Irenaeus rescued John's Gospel from the clutches of the Gnostics by welding it to "the far more widely quoted Gospels of Matthew and Luke."²⁴¹

Yet, there is another plausible explanation. As noted long ago by Harnack and Zahn, as well as in the more recent assessments of Hengel, Stanton and others, it may have been the case that there was an earlier conception of a four-fold Gospel. In this case the emergence of the four was not as a reactionary position, but a process of gradual acceptance that began prior to Marcion's "Gospel".²⁴² I shall argue below

²³⁹ Campenhausen, *Formation*, 164ff.; J. Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament: An Essay in the Early History of the Canon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942).

²⁴⁰ Hahneman, 101.

²⁴¹ Citation from E. Pagels, *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas* (New York: Random House, 2003), 112.

²⁴² It has been argued that Marcion's Gospel together with his corpus of ten modified letters of Paul (the 'Apostolikon') represented the earliest known "New Testament canon", though caution should be exercised in presuming alongside Campenhausen and Knox that the development of the canon within the Church was a heavily reactionary position. See Campenhausen, *Formation*, 148ff; and the full text of Knox, *Marcion*. To be sure, Campenhausen's view has shaped many of the present views of canon formation, but in his recent and landmark work, *The Arch-Heretic Marcion. WUNT 250* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), Sebastian Moll has reframed the issue in light of Marcion's own view of canon. He states, "Marcion was surely not the first Christian to consider certain texts as authoritative. If at all, he was the first to *limit* the number of these texts" (103). Moll concludes, "we could still maintain that Marcion can legitimately be called the founder of the first Christian 'authoritative collection of

that it is likely that early in the second century, Papias of Hierapolis knew of all four Gospels and recorded the story of their origins – thus providing a pre-Marcion account of the canonical four.

Yet, the appeals by Epiphanius' predecessors did not address the specific issues with which the bishop of Cyprus was concerned in his account of the *Alogi*. Their concerns appear to be much broader. Irenaeus, it is true, provides a defense and explanation of the quadriform Gospel; indeed, he actually *celebrates* the fact that there are four versions with a single theological unity (*AH* 3.11).²⁴³ But he is not responding to any specific criticism for their incompatibility. Among various early Church Fathers there was particular interest in the subject of the different beginnings of each of the Gospels. The issue of the different genealogical accounts in Matthew and Luke prompted Julius Africanus to pen an epistle to Aristides in which he sought to resolve the discrepancies by showing how the two accounts are actually in agreement (*Ep. ad Aristidem*; cf. *HE* 1.7, 6.31.3).²⁴⁴ There is also an attempt to explain the “different beginnings” of all four Gospels in the *Muratorian Fragment* as

books’,” but then he proceeds to offer the following analysis, which cuts straight to the core of the issue: “In order to establish a corpus of Scripture the Church as well as Marcion had to reach a point at which they considered themselves to be in a posterior age compared to the *Urgemeinde*. Once this deliberate distinction had been made, they began to see themselves no longer as the ‘producers’ of Scripture, but merely as its interpreters” (104). Moll argues that in the whole discussion of the formation of a “canon” this happened much earlier for Marcion than it did for the Church, because Marcion believed the original texts had reached a point in which they were becoming falsified and thus he attempted to re-establish the originals. In challenging the prevailing paradigm of Marcion based on the works of Harnack, Moll has also reshaped the discussion of Marcion’s role in the canon formation, though Harnack and Moll share some common ground on this issue. Here see Harnack, *Marcion, The Gospel of the Alien God*, trans. John E. Steely and Lyle D. Bierma (Durham, N.C.: Labyrinth Press, 1990), translated from the original: *Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott. Eine Monographie zur Geschichte der Grundlegung der katholischen Kirche* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1921). Moll is quick to note, however, that the exact process of orthodox canon making is not the main focus of his study, but his insights provide a valuable contribution to the issue. Other scholars have challenged the Campenhausen/Knox paradigm, including the recent studies of M. Hengel, who argues that Marcion’s “canon” was not the impetus for the creation of the catholic New Testament, but that it expedited the process of an implicit acceptance of a four Gospel canon that can be traced to a period before Marcion. See further, Hengel, *Four Gospels*, esp. 32 and 229-30, n. 131; Stanton, “Fourfold Gospel,” esp. 336ff.; and the recent work by Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?* It is important not to overlook the landmark works of A. von Harnack, *The Origin of the New Testament and the Most Important Consequences of the New Creation* (London and New York, 1925), 69-72; and T. Zahn, *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* (Erlangen: Andreas Deichert, 1888) I, 153. Both of these still provide excellent positions that run counter to the later views of Campenhausen and Knox. See also the important insights of Metzger, *Canon*, 90-9, and esp. 282, where he distinguishes between “canon” as a “collection of authoritative books” and “an authoritative collection of books”.

²⁴³ See Stanton, “Fourfold Gospel,” 320-1; also Merkel, *Widersprüche*, 42-3.

²⁴⁴ The Greek text of the *Epistle ad Aristidem* along with a German translation is provided by Merkel, *Plurität*, 50-7.

well. Tertullian brushes aside the issue of variations amongst the beginnings of the Gospels in his polemic against Marcion (*Adv. Marc.* 4.2). The different beginnings of the Gospels are also a prominent feature in Epiphanius' testimony of the *Alogi* as well, but his attention is devoted to the more specific criticisms that were not addressed by his predecessors.

3.4 Epiphanius' *Alogi*: A Broad Defense of the Four-fold Gospel

In light of this historical context, it is apparent that the account of the *Alogi* is primarily Epiphanius' own attempt at reconciling the four Gospels, which is couched in his response to the criticisms of the so-called *Alogi*. Prior to Epiphanius there were a number of different solutions to the differences between the Gospels, many of which arose sharply in the second century. The debt that Epiphanius owes to those that came before him will become clearer in the following chapters. Yet, whereas many of his predecessors focused on the problem of accepting multiple Gospels or the different beginnings of the Gospels, Epiphanius goes much further in recording other, *specific* objections that were not treated in the writings of those that came before him. It is also notable that his testimony is much broader than simply a record of the objections of the so-called *Alogi* against the Johannine corpus, for he records various criticisms regarding the integrity and authenticity of the four-fold Gospel that do not directly fit with the way in which he describes the *Alogi*. Although he accuses the *Alogi* of attributing the Gospel and Apocalypse of John to Cerinthus, Cerinthus himself emerges as a target of refutation throughout this testimony. The same is true for the Ebionites, Valentinians, Celsus, Porphyry and Philosabbatius – all of which do not fit the mould Epiphanius casts for the *Alogi*, but who are nevertheless included in his testimony because they are guilty in one way or another of rejecting the integrity and compatibility of the Gospels.

Having established the broader context in which Epiphanius describes the *Alogi*, the focus now shifts to the way in which he uses the testimonies of earlier Church Fathers in the construction of this heresy.

CHAPTER FOUR

Epiphanius' Use of Papias and Irenaeus

4.1 Papias of Hierapolis

The earliest source in Epiphanius' account of the *Alogi* is that of Papias of Hierapolis. Indeed, the earliest tradition of the origins of the Gospels begins with what Papias had to say towards the beginning of the second century. Not only is the Papian tradition visible in the writings of Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius and others, it also plays a vital role in Epiphanius' refutation of the so-called *Alogi*.

The extant information on Papias and his writings comes only through the information provided by later writers. Irenaeus states that Papias was "a hearer of John, companion of Polycarp and a man of old time," who wrote five books (*AH* 5.33.4; cf. *HE* 3.36.1-2, 3.39.1). The identity of this "John" is unclear and the subject of much scrutiny, as Papias' account mentions two Johns: John the apostle and John the elder (*HE* 3.39.4). Nevertheless, this testimony, in addition to other fragments that suggest Papias' work belongs in the time of Hadrian, is central to dating Papias in or around the first quarter of the second-century.²⁴⁵

Irenaeus preserves aspects of Papias' eschatological views (*AH* 5.33.4), but he does not mention Papias' name in association with his testimony of the origins of the Gospels (at least Matthew and Mark; *AH* 3.1.1) for which Papias is best known, even though similarities between the two suggest that he is borrowing from Papias' account. Eusebius, in contrast, does attribute to Papias the well-known account of the origins of the Gospels, at least those of Matthew and Mark. According to Eusebius, Papias himself claims not to have known any of the apostles directly (*HE* 3.39.2-4). Nevertheless, Papias was determined to "examine closely the words of the elders – what Andrew or Peter said, or Philip, or Thomas or James, or John or

²⁴⁵ E.g. Philip of Side (5th cent.) records that Papias mentions those who Jesus raised from the dead surviving to the time of Hadrian (117-38 A.D.). See frg. 16 in J. Kürzinger, *Papias von Hierapolis und die Evangelien des Neuen Testaments* (Regensburg: Verlag FriedrichPustet, 1983), 166-7 = frg. 5 in J.B. Lightfoot and J.R. Harmer (eds.), *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*. Revised by Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 317-18. For more, see Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 13-14; Campenhausen, *Formation*, 129ff. See also frg. 4 in Kürzinger; cf. also frgs. 10-11 in Lightfoot, Harmer and Holmes for additional information pertaining to Papias' dates.

Matthew or the other of the Lord's disciples, and whatever Aristion and the elder John, the disciples of the Lord, said" (*HE* 3.39.4). Such a record would be of untold value, but unfortunately Eusebius chose only to preserve fragments of the tradition that Papias collected from those who knew the apostles. The most common explanation for Eusebius' scanty citations of Papias is that the former had a low estimation of the latter, describing him as a man with a "very small mind" (σφόδρα μικρὸς τὸν νοῦν) because of his chiliastic views (*HE* 3.39.12-13) – an eschatological position strongly opposed by Eusebius.

However, Eusebius does manage to preserve Papias' tradition of the origins of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. In *HE* 3.39.15-17 Eusebius cites Papias as follows:

(15) And the elder (ὁ πρεσβύτερος) said: 'Mark, who, becoming Peter's interpreter, wrote down accurately everything he remembered, although not in order, the things said or done by the Lord. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed him, but later, as I said, he followed Peter, who adapted his teachings as necessary but had no intention of making an ordered account of the sayings of the Lord. So Mark did not do anything wrong in writing down some things as he remembered them, for he made one purpose: not to leave out anything that he heard or to make some false statement in them.' These, then, are the accounts given by Papias concerning Mark. (16) But regarding Matthew he said: 'Thus, Matthew arranged (συνετάξατο) the teachings in the Hebrew language ('Εβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ) and each person interpreted them according to his own ability.' (17a) He [also] used testimonies from the first epistle of John and again from that of Peter.²⁴⁶

These are the words of Papias, but it is important to note that he is relaying the tradition that was told to him by "the elder" (ὁ πρεσβύτερος).²⁴⁷

The essential information on the origins of Matthew and Mark found in the testimony of Papias was to be repeated by numerous subsequent Church Fathers. Certainly Epiphanius maintains the notice that Matthew wrote his account in Hebrew ('Εβραϊκοῖς γράμμασι; *Haer.* 51.5.3) and that Mark's Gospel is a product of his relationship with Peter (*Haer.* 51.6.10). That Epiphanius derived his knowledge directly from the writings of Papias is unlikely, for he does not claim to know Papias' work firsthand. Thus, this information is likely mediated by a later writer who was reliant upon this tradition – perhaps Irenaeus or Eusebius.

²⁴⁶ *GCS* 2,1 *Eusebius Werke*, 290-2.

²⁴⁷ Cf. C.E. Hill, *From the Lost Teaching of Polycarp: Identifying Irenaeus' Apostolic Presbyter and Author of Ad Diognetum*. *WUNT* 186 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 33.

Eusebius does not explicitly mention any record from Papias on the Gospels of Luke and John, which has prompted the question whether Papias knew of these texts. If he did, and if he spoke of their origins, why does Eusebius not record what he has to say? Despite Eusebius' silence, many have argued that there is good reason to believe Papias did know these Gospels. Regarding the Fourth Gospel in particular, some scholars have argued that Papias' sequence of the apostles listed above (*HE* 3.39.4) does not reflect the Synoptic order, but rather that of John. As M. Hengel notes, "the affinities between the sequence of disciples in John 1.35-51, the list in John 21.2 and in Papias are striking and certainly no coincidence."²⁴⁸ But opinions such as that of Hengel have been around since the time of J. B. Lightfoot and more recently in the works of R. Bauckham, R. A. Culpepper, G. Stanton and C. E. Hill – each providing additional evidence to suggest that Papias knew the Gospel of John.²⁴⁹

One consideration is the mention of I John, which points to the likelihood of Papias' knowledge of the Fourth Gospel for at least two reasons: (i) as Lightfoot argued, I John was written not only at or around the same time as the Gospel of John, but it was also probably attached to it,²⁵⁰ also, (ii) Papias may have mentioned the first epistle of John to corroborate the Gospel by the same author, much the same way as he does with I Peter and Mark's Gospel.²⁵¹ With regard to the question of why Eusebius would not include Papias' information on the Gospel of John, Hengel may be right in noting the possibility that "Eusebius sometimes concealed information which seemed disagreeable to him or omitted it through carelessness."²⁵² Yet there is another explanation that is more likely. Hill has argued that Eusebius' record of the origins of the Gospels of John in *HE* 3.24.5-13 actually masks what is

²⁴⁸ Hengel, *Johannine Question*, 17-18, also p. 155, n. 101. Also, Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays*, 69.

²⁴⁹ Hengel, *Johannine Question*, 17-23; Lawlor, "Eusebius on Papias," *Hermathena* 19 (1922): 167-222, esp. 202, n. 1; Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays*, 63-70; R. Bauckham, "Papias and Polycrates," 24-69; eadem, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 225-6; Stanton, "Fourfold Gospel," 333; C.E. Hill, "What Papias Said about John (and Luke): A 'New' Papian Fragment," *JTS* 49 (1998): 582-629; eadem, "The Orthodox Gospel," 285ff.; Culpepper, *John*, 111-12. For an opposing view, see Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 204-5.

²⁵⁰ Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays*, 63.

²⁵¹ This presumes that the passages are I Peter 5:13 and I John 1:1-4. See Bauckham, "Papias," 47, 55. Bauckham was preceded in this notion by J.B. Lightfoot, *Essays on the Work entitled Supernatural Religion* (London: Macmillan, 1889), 206. See also Hill, "What Papias Said," 594.

²⁵² Hengel, *Johannine Question*, 21.

the tradition of Papias, and that Eusebius simply did not attribute it to him.²⁵³ As I shall argue below, this is partially true, but it is far more nuanced and much more significant than Hill realizes. When Epiphanius' use of Eusebius is examined in Chapter 6, the very important role that this passage (*HE* 3.24.5-13) plays in his account of the *Alogi* will be made much clearer. It is enough for now to recognize the fact that the tradition of Papias is one important component to Epiphanius' refutation of the *Alogi*.

4.2 Irenaeus of Lyons

Irenaeus and the Four-Fold Gospel

Any thorough discussion surrounding the use of, or opposition to, the Gospel of John in the early church is inevitably tied to the testimony of Irenaeus of Lyons. Irenaeus is the earliest Church Father to pronounce explicitly the Gospel of John as an accepted work and to quote from it extensively in his refutation of the heresies. His argument for the necessity of a four-fold Gospel is well known, particularly as it represents the earliest extant argument for a closed Gospel canon that comprises only those of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. For Irenaeus, any attempt to reduce or expand the four-fold Gospel is misguided: "It is not possible," he states, "that the Gospels can be either more or fewer than they are" (*AH* 3.11.8). Irenaeus' conclusion for the necessity of a four-fold Gospel is the capstone of a methodical, measured and unique theological argument for the recognition of these four books as the authoritative, inspired, "scriptural"²⁵⁴ foundation of the orthodox Rule of Truth (cf. *AH* 2.35.4, 3.9-11).

As with Epiphanius, Irenaeus notes the different beginnings of the Gospels in *AH* 3.11.8. Yet, rather than provide an explanation or apology for the differences found in the beginnings of the Gospels, Irenaeus cleverly converts the issue of four different Gospels from a liability to an asset. Lightfoot puts it well: "He ransacks heaven and earth for reasons why the evangelical record should thus be

²⁵³ Hill, "What Papias Said About John (And Luke): A 'New' Papian Fragment," *JTS* 49 NS (1998): 582-269.

²⁵⁴ "Irenaeus, so far as we can tell, was the first catholic theologian who dared to adopt the Marcionite principle of a new 'scripture' in order to use it in his turn against Marcion and all heretics." Campenhausen, *Formation*, 186.

foursquared.”²⁵⁵ Irenaeus argues that there must be four Gospels because there are four zones in the world, four principal winds, four faces of the cherubim (Ez. 1:1-21, 10:20), four living creatures (Rev. 4:7), the fourfold activity of the Word of God, and four covenants that God made with mankind.²⁵⁶ All of these points reflect the theological unity of the Word’s dispensation of the quadriform (τετράμορφον εὐαγγέλιον) Gospel, held together by the Spirit (AH 3.11.8).²⁵⁷ Rather than being contradictory, Irenaeus sees the four Gospels as enunciating the different characteristics of Jesus’ life and ministry. John begins by displaying Jesus’ original, effectual and glorious generation from the Father. The beginning of Luke shows the priestly character of Christ while Matthew begins by relating His generation as a man. Finally, Mark shows the prophetic aspect.

When one turns to Epiphanius’ response to the objections to the Gospel of John by the *Alogi*, there is clear evidence of Irenaeus’ testimony (AH 3.1.1) in which traces of Papias’ testimony are also readily apparent. Both Irenaeus and Epiphanius note that Matthew wrote his Gospel first among the Hebrews in their language (ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν; cf. *Haer.* 51.5.3). Next, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, handed down the Gospel that Peter had preached (cf. *Haer.* 6.10). In his account (AH 3.1.1) Irenaeus adds the story of the origins of the Gospels of Luke and John that is not found in Papias’ notice in *HE* 3.39; but it does appear in the text of Epiphanius. Both Irenaeus and Epiphanius state that Luke, the companion of Paul, issued the Gospel taught by Paul (cf. *Haer.* 51.11.6), and finally John published his Gospel during his time in Ephesus in Asia (cf. *Haer.* 51.2.3-4, 51.12.2).

Irenaeus’ tradition of the origins of the four Gospels was clearly influenced by Papias’ account of the origins of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark (*HE* 3.39),²⁵⁸ and quite possibly the Gospels of Luke and John as well, presuming Papias said as much. This tradition was to become well known, repeated and expanded elsewhere.²⁵⁹ There are definite parallels between Epiphanius and Irenaeus

²⁵⁵ Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays*, 78.

²⁵⁶ See T.C. Skeat, “Irenaeus and the Four-Gospel Canon,” *NovT* 34, no. 2 (1992): 194-199.

²⁵⁷ See Hengel, *Four Gospels*, 10; Campenhausen, *Formation*, 195. Cf. Merkel, *Widersprüche*, 42-3. On the strength of this argument in an historical context, see G. Stanton, “The Fourfold Gospel,” 319ff.

²⁵⁸ Cf. Hengel, *Johannine Question*, 3. On Irenaeus’ use of Papias, see Chapman, 15-16; Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays*, 67-8.

²⁵⁹ Hill, “What Papias Said,” 585. Cf. Bauckham, “Papias,” 63ff.

concerning their accounts of the origins of the Gospels, but that is not all that is common to these Church Fathers.

Irenaeus' Testimony as the Foundation of the so-called Alogi

Subsequent to his argument detailing the validity and necessity of these four Gospels, Irenaeus attacks those who “destroy” this quadriform Gospel. He notes that some see the need for more Gospels, while others want fewer. Two groups are readily predictable: the Valentinians claim that their *Gospel of Truth* is on par with those of the apostles, and Marcion only accepts a redacted form of the Gospel of Luke (AH 3.11.9; cf. 1.27.2-4). Irenaeus then mentions another anonymous group, who reject the Paraclete and therefore must also reject the Gospel of John. This notice is important for a number of reasons; not least of which is that it is a foundational element of Epiphanius' *Alogi*.

Others (*Alii*), indeed, in order to frustrate the gift of the Spirit, which in the most recent times – according to the pleasure of the Father – was poured out on the human race, do not admit that appearance in the Gospel of John, where the Lord promised that he would send the Paraclete; but they reject both the Gospel and the prophetic Spirit. Wretched men indeed, who want²⁶⁰ to be false prophets, they in fact reject the prophetic grace from the Church, just like those who – on account of those who come in hypocrisy – also abstain from communion with the brethren. I understand, moreover, that those of this kind (also) do not accept the Apostle Paul. For in that epistle which is to the Corinthians prophetic gifts are mentioned and he (Paul) knows men and women prophesying in the Church. Sinning against the Spirit of God in all these things, therefore, they fall into the irremissible sin (Mt. 12:32; AH 3.11.9).²⁶¹

Epiphanius makes a nearly identical statement in his final description of the *Alogi*. In his closing remarks, Epiphanius has this to say:

²⁶⁰ Many scholars have proposed amending the Latin text by replacing the word “*nolunt*” for “*uolunt*”, thus: “*qui pseudoprophetas quidem esse nolunt*” (“they do *not* wish to be false prophets”). Other emendations include transposing “*pseudoprophetas*” for “*pseudoprophetae*”. These emendations are generally proposed to clarify a reading of Irenaeus that presumes the prophetic Spirit is a reference to the Montanist Paraclete. Smith, who does not believe any emendations are necessary, puts the question well: if Irenaeus is referring to a group of anti-Montanists in this passage, “Why would such persons desire to be prophets at all, especially false prophets, since it is this very audacious activity with respect to the prophetic charisma which is suspect to them and has resulted in their own repudiation of the Gospel of John?” Smith, “Gaius,” 147. For a summary of scholarly positions on various emendations, see Bludau, 31ff.; Labriolle, *Crise*, 234ff. Although such a textual amendment is entirely understandable and possibly reflects the original text, I have preserved the standard Latin reading because I find the transmitted text to be comprehensible and coherent as it is.

²⁶¹ Latin text from A. Rousseau, *Irénée de Lyon: Contre les Hérésies*, Livre III. SC 211 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1974), 170-2.

But since these people have not received the Holy Spirit they are judged for not observing the things of the Spirit, and being willing to speak against the words of the Spirit. They do not see the gifts of grace in the holy Church, which, with understanding and a sound mind, the Holy Spirit set out in detail, so also the holy apostles, and the holy prophets have followed truly and vigorously. Among these, St. John has given his gracious gift to the holy church, through the Gospel, the Epistles and Revelation. But as it is said, ‘He who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in the one to come.’ (Mt. 12:32) For they have also waged war against the words spoken by the Spirit (*Haer.* 51.35.1-3).²⁶²

When one compares these two testimonies it is clear that what Irenaeus says in *AH* 3.11.9 is the platform upon which Epiphanius constructs his *Alogi*. The crime and the punishment are identical – so also is the structure and sentiment.²⁶³

Epiphanius’ <i>Alogi</i> (<i>Haer.</i> 51.35.1-3)	Irenaeus’ <i>Alii</i> (<i>AH</i> 3.11.9)
(I.a) Have not received the Holy Spirit	(I.b) Frustrate the gift of the Spirit
(II.a) Do not know the gifts of grace in the holy Church	(II.b) Repel the gift of grace from the Church
(III.a) These are the gifts that the holy apostles and prophets have expounded	(III.b) Paul writes about prophetic gifts; (cf. <i>AH</i> 3.1.1-2, 3.6.1-5, 3.17.1)
(IV.a) John shared his holy gift through his Gospel, Epistles and Revelation.	(IV.b) According to the Gospel of John God promised the Paraclete
(V.a) They are guilty of the irremissible sin (Matt. 12:32)	(V.b) They are guilty of the irremissible sin (Matt. 12:32)

The parallels between these two testimonies are too striking to deny that Epiphanius derived this portion of his testimony from anyone other than Irenaeus.²⁶⁴ It is clear throughout his testimony that Epiphanius has expounded upon this notice of Irenaeus. The latter does not record anything else about his anonymous group whereas Epiphanius attributes criticisms and other unique features to the *Alogi*.

Many scholars suggest that the “*Alii*” of *AH* 3.11.9 refers to a group of anti-Montanists, who wanted to do away with the Fourth Gospel because it was in this

²⁶² *GCS* 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 310-11.

²⁶³ Cf. Bludau, 168.

²⁶⁴ See Bardy, 358; Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 187. I find no reason to agree with Smith (“Gaius,” 254) that this could have been mediated through Hippolytus’ lost work against Gaius.

Gospel that the “prophetic Spirit” is promised.²⁶⁵ The question as to whether Irenaeus is referring to the issue of Montanism in *AH* 3.11.9 is a significant issue that will be discussed more fully in Section III, but I note a few important points here. It is actually far from certain that Irenaeus intended this group to reflect anti-Montanists, for he does not mention the New Prophecy at all in his treatise.²⁶⁶ There is also some confusion as to the viability of dating Irenaeus’ comments with the progression of Montanism. Eusebius notes that the Montanism “outbreak” (καινοτομηθείσης) occurred during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, sometime in the decade of 170 A.D. (*HE* 4.27).²⁶⁷ Epiphanius offers a much earlier date in the nineteenth year of Antoninus Pius, around 156-7 A.D. (*Haer.* 48.1.2), but Eusebius’ dating appears more reliable.²⁶⁸ If Eusebius’ account is right, then the New Prophecy emerged within the same decade as Irenaeus’ *Adversus Haereses*. Thus, Irenaeus *might* have known of the New Prophecy. His comments about false prophets and those who pretend to utter prophecies under the influence of a false spirit may reflect his own questions about it (*AH* 4.33.6-7).²⁶⁹ Also, he *might* have known about ecclesiastical backlash to the New Prophecy, but this conclusion should be proffered cautiously. Anti-Montanism is not the only possible explanation. Shortly after the time of Irenaeus there was a trend to disallow *any* prophecy in the church. True prophecy was a thing of the past, a feature of the apostolic era.²⁷⁰ In this passage, Irenaeus may have been responding to those who advocated such a view of prophecy, not necessarily the New Prophecy and the ecclesiastical response to it.

In any case, when one looks at Epiphanius’ testimony here (*Haer.* 51.35.1-3) and throughout his defense of the Gospel of John, it is clear that he does not interpret Irenaeus’ notice in *AH* 3.11.9 as having anything to do with Montanism. If he did, surely there would be at least some trace of the issue of the New Prophecy either in

²⁶⁵ Culpepper, 121; R.E. Heine, “The Gospel of John and the Montanist Debate at Rome,” *Studia Patristica* 21 (1989), 99; Smith, “Gaius,” 254-5; Campenhausen, 238-9, n. 159; Fisher, 2; Streeter, 438-9.

²⁶⁶ For Irenaeus’ “wait and see” attitude towards the New Prophecy, see Campenhausen, 232; Labriolle, *Crise*, 231ff.

²⁶⁷ For the complexities surrounding the dates of Montanism, see esp. T.D. Barnes, “The Chronology of Montanism,” *JTS* n/s, 21 (1970), 403-8; also Cerrato, 204.

²⁶⁸ Barnes (“Chronology,” 406) argues convincingly against Epiphanius’ dating.

²⁶⁹ Cf. G. Valée, *A Study in Anti-Gnostic Polemics: Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Epiphanius* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1981), 34.

²⁷⁰ This is certainly true of Rome during the time of Gaius. See further discussion in Chapter 8.

the objections to the Gospel of John or in his rebuttal. Instead, as A. Brent has noted, “Turning to Epiphanius’ defence of the Fourth Gospel itself, the absence of a specific anti-Montanist polemic on the part of the Ἀλογοὶ is likewise evident. There is no discussion of the Paraclete passages nor of *Jn.* 21, and the relationship between charisma and Order.”²⁷¹ Whether or not Irenaeus is referring to a group of anti-Montanists there is absolutely no indication in Epiphanius’ testimony that he conceives of the *Alogi* as being such.

The major difference between Irenaeus’ testimony and that found in Epiphanius is the reversal of the elements that are rejected. For Irenaeus, the rejection of the Spirit is what leads to the rejection of the Gospel of John wherein the Paraclete is promised. In contrast, Epiphanius inverts this process. This is an important point that is almost universally overlooked; for Epiphanius, it is the rejection of the Gospel of John that is tantamount to the rejection of the Spirit, which inspired the apostles who authored the Gospels. Nowhere does Epiphanius indicate that the Spirit is the target of this group’s disdain, as is found in Irenaeus.

Yet Epiphanius’ take on Irenaeus’ testimony is not dissimilar from the common view of the present day. This notice is overwhelmingly, and wrongly, interpreted as an anonymous group having formally rejected the Fourth Gospel. But careful exegesis of this passage suggests that this is not what Irenaeus intends at all. Rather, it is plainly seen that he is accusing this group of rejecting that aspect of John’s Gospel *in qua Paraclitum se missurum Dominus promisit*. As Allen Brent notes, “Irenaeus does not therefore claim that they reject the Fourth Gospel itself but only that in rejecting the Spirit as Paraclete they are indirectly rejecting that Gospel which they might indeed have formally accepted whilst being oblivious to the contradictions in such a position.”²⁷² Irenaeus makes this abundantly clear in the following lines, where he indicts these anonymous critics for “repelling the prophetic grace from the Church” (*propheticam uero gratiam repellunt ab Ecclesia*). He also goes on to state that such persons must also reject Paul, for he too speaks of prophecy. But in the same way that Irenaeus is not formally stating that they reject the Pauline corpus, so too he does not explicitly denounce this anonymous group’s views of rejecting the Gospel of John.

²⁷¹ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 143.

²⁷² Ibid., 139. See also Hengel (*Four Gospels*, 21), who rightly notes that this criticism is directed against the Paraclete.

Furthermore, the fact that Irenaeus states that this group is guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit – the irremissible sin – is further evidence that this group’s crime is against the Paraclete, not necessarily the Gospel of John. Irenaeus makes a similar notice in his later work, *Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching* (99), where he mentions the same group that “do not receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and drive away the prophetic grace from the Church.”²⁷³ Yet here Irenaeus makes no mention at all of the Gospel of John being at stake, rather it is the gifts of the Holy Spirit that are rejected, and the grace of prophecy that is repudiated. If there had existed a group within early Christianity that formally rejected the Fourth Gospel, Irenaeus would undoubtedly have had more to say than this brief gloss. While it is enticing to interpret Irenaeus’ notice in *AH* 3.11.9 as suggesting that some banished the Fourth Gospel from the church, the fairest reading of the evidence suggests that Irenaeus did not specifically intend John’s Gospel to be viewed as a volatile component of his four-fold Gospel canon.

Perhaps Epiphanius could be accused of garbling the reading of *AH* 3.11.9, but in fairness to him this passage has been interpreted many different ways, and it remains the subject of much scrutiny. Before Epiphanius is rendered incompetent, as is often the case, it is easy to see where Epiphanius would have picked up his own way of thinking about the Gospel and the Spirit in the writings of Irenaeus. For example, immediately after this notice, Irenaeus goes on to refer to the Spirit as that which appeared at Pentecost and dwelt within the apostles as they went out to preach the Gospel (*AH* 3.12). Irenaeus also states that the apostles preached the Gospel because they were endowed with the Holy Spirit (*AH* 3.1.1; cf. 3.24.1). Moreover, in his argument for the necessity of a four-fold Gospel, Irenaeus emphasizes the fact that this τετράμορφον...εὐαγγέλιον is divinely willed to be “held together by one Spirit” (*AH* 3.11.8).²⁷⁴ Thus, the role of the Spirit as understood and articulated repeatedly²⁷⁵ by Epiphanius in his defense against the attacks of the so-called *Alogi* is also intimated in Irenaeus. But, for Epiphanius, these so-called *Alogi* do not

²⁷³ *Alii autem dona Spiritus sancti non recipiunt et abiciunt a seipsis charisma propheticum.* Adelin Rousseau, *Irénée de Lyon, Démonstration de la Prédication Apostolique.* SC 406 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1995), 218.

²⁷⁴ See esp. Fr. gr. 11 of *AH* 3.11.8 in SC 211, 162.

²⁷⁵ *Haer.* 51.4.11; cf. 51.6.2, 5, 11-12; 51.9.1; 51.12.2; 51.16.9; 51.20.5; 51.21.14.

understand the role of the Spirit, and as a result of rejecting the Gospel of John they commit the sin of blaspheming the Spirit (*Haer.* 51.35.1-3).

Cerinthus and the Ebionites in Irenaeus and Epiphanius

That Epiphanius used additional aspects of Irenaeus' testimony in his account of the so-called *Alogi* is further corroborated when one examines Epiphanius' introductory statements. Epiphanius clearly borrows from Irenaeus (*AH* 3.11.1) in his introduction, where he states that John was impelled by the Holy Spirit to correct the teachings of Cerinthus and others (*Haer.* 51.2.3, 51.4.1-2, 51.12.3). Furthermore, as with Irenaeus (*AH* 1.26.1-2), Epiphanius associates Ebion with Cerinthus, both in his account of the *Alogi* (*Haer.* 51.2.3, 51.10.4, 51.12.3) and in his account of the Ebionites (e.g. *Haer.* 30.1.3, 30.3.7, 30.14.1). Epiphanius derived much of his knowledge from Irenaeus' notice concerning the similarity between the Ebionites and Cerinthus (*AH* 1.26.2), though it is also possible that he would have known of the same association noted by Hippolytus (*Ref.* 7.22), who also follows Irenaeus' lead very closely.²⁷⁶ Elsewhere in the *Panarion*, Epiphanius repeats Irenaeus' notice that the Ebionites have similar beliefs as Cerinthus: both believe that Jesus was fleshly and not born of a virgin and that Christ was the spiritual form that came to Jesus in the form of a dove at his baptism (*Haer.* 30.16.3).

Yet it must be said that at times Epiphanius leaves little room to doubt the fact that he *does* garble the information he reads in Irenaeus. For example, in his chapter on the Ebionites (*Haer.* 30), Epiphanius recounts a story of St. John encountering Ebion in the baths in Asia, at which time John cried out that they should all leave lest the bath fall and bury them with Ebion inside (*Haer.* 30.24.1-5). This story originates with Polycarp and is recounted by Irenaeus (*AH* 3.3.4; cf. *HE* 3.28.6), only it was not Ebion, but Cerinthus in the baths. He also attributes characteristics that Irenaeus gives only to the Ebionites and transfers them to Cerinthus, such as the fact that Cerinthus only used the Gospel of Matthew (*Haer.* 28.5.1, 28.7.4; cf. 30.14.2) and rejected Paul (*Haer.* 28.5.3).²⁷⁷

²⁷⁶ Later writers, also indebted to Irenaeus, make this connection as well (e.g. Victorinus in *Apoc.* 11.1; Jerome *De vir. ill.* 9; Monarchian Prologue).

²⁷⁷ Although Irenaeus mentions Cerinthus in the same passage as the Ebionites, he only attributes these qualities to the latter (*AH* 1.26.2).

There are numerous traces of Irenaeus' testimony that can be clearly detected in the testimony of Epiphanius' *Alogi*. If Epiphanius is in fact manufacturing a composite heresy, it is easy to see how the testimony of Irenaeus would have been a foundational element in the way Epiphanius went about collecting the pieces of the so-called *Alogi*. Not only is the testimony of Irenaeus visible in the way in which Epiphanius describes the *Alogi* both in the introduction and conclusion, it is also evident throughout the rest of Epiphanius' testimony as well, such as Irenaeus' account of the origins of the Gospels as well as the second objection of the so-called *Alogi* against the Gospel of John, to which this examination now turns.

Irenaeus and the Second Objection to the Gospel of John

The second objection of the so-called *Alogi* focuses on the apparent discrepancy between the number of Passovers during Jesus' ministry that are recorded in John's Gospel as compared to the number in the Synoptics. Here again Epiphanius is engaged with the testimony of Irenaeus, though it is clear that he does not always agree with what Irenaeus had to say. Charles Hill is right to note that in his response to the second objection against the Gospel of John, Epiphanius provides a corrective to what he perceives to be an erroneous position of Irenaeus.²⁷⁸

To demonstrate this, first it is necessary to determine what Irenaeus has to say on the matter. In *AH* 2.22, Irenaeus attacks the Valentinian claim that the thirty Aeons in their godhead correspond to the thirty years of Christ's life. In his attempt to extirpate this false correlation of the Valentinians, Irenaeus argues that they do not correctly understand the "acceptable year of the Lord" (Is. 61:2), which the Valentinians believed was the twelve month period of Jesus' ministry after his baptism (*AH* 2.22.1; 1.3.3) and the final year of his life.²⁷⁹ In contrast, Irenaeus argues that the "acceptable year of the Lord" was the entire period of time in which men heard and believed the preaching of the Gospel (*AH* 2.22.2). To disprove the Valentinian belief that Jesus only preached one year and died at the age of thirty, he mentions three Passovers recorded in the Gospel of John in an attempt to disprove

²⁷⁸ Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 187-8. Smith ("Gaius," 382) suggests this is simply an "unrelated discussion" that only has a "tangential relationship" to the real arguments against the Johannine literature by the *Alogi*.

²⁷⁹ So also was the view of Clement of Alexandria *Strom.* 1.21.

them from the very Gospel of which the Valentinians were so fond (*AH* 3.11.7). Irenaeus then states the obvious: these three Passovers did not all happen in one year (*AH* 3.22.2).

So far so good. Yet Irenaeus goes on to make the rather befuddling assertion that the Gospel of John as well as the tradition from Asia Minor prove that Jesus lived for more than fifty years, and thus the entire system of the Gnostic Aeons is proven to be false, “for the period between the thirtieth and fiftieth year could never be regarded as one year” (*AH* 2.22.5-6; cf. John 8:56-57). “How is it possible,” Irenaeus asks, “that the Lord only preached for one year?” (*AH* 2.22.3). Irenaeus is mistaken, and Epiphanius, it turns out, has the answer.

When attention is given to Epiphanius’ testimony, one finds his implicit correction of Irenaeus’ bizarre defense that Jesus died as a pentagenarian and his belief that the period of Jesus’ ministry identified as the “acceptable year of the Lord” (*AH* 2.22.2) lasted for much longer than one year. According to Epiphanius the “acceptable year of the Lord” is, in fact, “a year without opposition” (*Haer.* 51.25.1, 51.27.4, 51.28.2). Furthermore, after providing a list of thirty consulships to demonstrate the accurate year of Christ’s suffering, Epiphanius states:

For who has numbered the successive consulships, which cannot be mistaken, and not think contemptuously about those who customarily hold that there is a discrepancy in the number of years which is given by the evangelists? For, because of this, it is also the downfall of the earlier Valentinian heresy and some others with their fictitious recordings of the thirty Aeons they thought they could compare the years of the Savior’s life, in order to make it possible for them to record the story of their aeons and first principles. For one finds that it is the thirty-third year of his incarnation that the Only-begotten suffered (*Haer.* 51.23.2-4a).²⁸⁰

After this argument Epiphanius expounds on a long and tedious chronological proof in which he provides the dates of Christ’s birth, ministry and death and numbers the Passovers during Jesus’ ministry as three (*Haer.* 51.24.1-51.27.6). Following this excursus, Epiphanius returns to his refutation of the Valentinians and his correction of Irenaeus’ argument. “First, Valentinus is put to shame as a dramatist since he expects (to prove) to us that there are thirty aeons from the years of the Savior’s childhood leading up to his manhood. He does not realize that [the Savior] did not live for only thirty years” (*Haer.* 51.28.1). Epiphanius then states that Jesus was baptized “at the age of twenty-nine years and ten months,” and that “all the years of his incarnation, from his birth until his passion amounted to thirty-

²⁸⁰ GCS 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 291-2.

two years and seventy-four days;” thus “Valentinus is refuted, and the many others who are just as foolish” (*Haer.* 51.28.2-3).

It is certifiable that Epiphanius knows of Irenaeus’ witness concerning the Valentinians, for he quotes all eleven chapters of Book I of *Against Heresies* that describe the Valentinian Gnostics (*Haer.* 31.9.1-31.32.9). He also refers to some of Irenaeus’ refutations of them, which happen to be found in the chapters surrounding Irenaeus’ argument for Christ living into his fifties.²⁸¹ Epiphanius even heralds the work of Irenaeus along with Hippolytus and Clement in refuting the Valentinians when he states, “I am not interested in adding to the work... since these men satisfy me and my purpose is exactly the same” (*Haer.* 31.33.3). Here, Epiphanius also promises that he will not mention the Valentinians any longer (*Haer.* 31.36.2). But of course this is not true since they reappear in his fifty-first entry; neither is he fully satisfied with all of Irenaeus’ refutations of the Valentinians.

The fact that both Irenaeus and Epiphanius tie together the issue of the number of Passovers to the argument against the Valentinians demonstrates that Epiphanius knew and used Irenaeus’ testimony. Yet Irenaeus’ argument is clearly mistaken, and so Epiphanius was compelled to use John’s Gospel to correct this erroneous teaching that Jesus was in his fifties when he died and thus the correlation between the number of Aeons and Jesus’ death is false (*AH* 2.22.5; John 8:56-57). Moreover, Epiphanius does not agree with Irenaeus’ number of Passovers that Jesus celebrated or that the “acceptable year of the Lord” lasted any longer than the first year of Jesus’ ministry – a year without opposition.

If Epiphanius is engaged with the testimony of Irenaeus, why does he not mention Irenaeus’ name? It very well could be the case, as Hill suggests, that he omits a reference to Irenaeus because he disagreed with his interpretation.²⁸² Yet it is worth recognizing the fact that Epiphanius draws on the testimony of Irenaeus repeatedly throughout his account of the *Alogi* without mentioning his name.²⁸³ In fact, Epiphanius is known for pillaging previous materials without always identifying his sources.

²⁸¹ e.g. *Haer.* 31.35.4=*AH* 2.20.2, cf. *AH.* 1.3.3; *Haer.* 31.35.6=*AH* 2.23.1, cf. *AH* 2.20.1

²⁸² Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 187, n. 56.

²⁸³ See Kim, 263.

Furthermore, one may wish to consider another point made by Hill, that the Valentinian controversy was a “precursor to that of those who reject John’s Gospel, partly because of bad chronology.”²⁸⁴ This is theoretically possible, but the evidence is beginning to mount in favor of looking past the testimony of the *Alogi* as historical fact, and instead seeing it as a conflation of various issues that Epiphanius brings together into a single category. This will become even clearer as consideration is given to Epiphanius’ use of other early Church Fathers.

²⁸⁴ Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 188.

CHAPTER FIVE

Epiphanius' Use of Origen

Origen is the earliest extant Church Father to speak directly to specific points of conflict between the Gospel of John and the Synoptics. For him, these areas of incongruence shake the very foundations of historical veracity of the Gospels. What is perhaps most interesting is that these issues that Origen notes coincide with the criticisms of the Gospel of John brought forward by the so-called *Alogi*. Yet the concern over the discrepancies between the Gospels is not all that Origen says on the matter, nor do these areas of incongruence culminate in dissuading him from accepting all four Gospels as authoritative. He maintains the tradition of the four Gospels begun by Papias, but in doing so he must wrestle with the difficulty in the differences and contradictions that exist between the Gospels. Origen's solution is found in his hermeneutic: he interprets the Gospels spiritually, or allegorically, rather than viewing them as representing a precise history. This hermeneutical approach would not sit well with Epiphanius – so much so that, as I shall argue, Origen's analysis of the discrepancies amongst the Gospels comprised the substance of the criticisms of the *Alogi*, and his allegorical hermeneutic of Scripture was the impetus for Epiphanius' lengthy argument for the coherence of the Gospels. Before examining the difficult issues that Origen raises, however, it is important to begin with what he has to say about the legitimacy of the four Gospels.

5.1 Origen and the Papian Tradition

Origen's comments on the Gospels come primarily from what Eusebius preserves of Origen's commentaries on Matthew and John; supplementary information is found in Origen's *Homilies on Luke*. That which Eusebius includes represents a record of the origins of the four Gospels that is very much in line with the tradition that had developed before him. Specifically, Origen carries on the tradition of the Gospels found in the writings of Papias, Irenaeus, and others.

In *HE* 6.25.3-6 Eusebius records portions of the first book of Origen's *Commentary on Matthew* in which he states that he only acknowledges (εἰδέναι) four

Gospels.²⁸⁵ These four are “the only indisputable ones in the Church of God under heaven.” Origen states that he “learned by tradition” (ἐν παραδόσει μαθὼν) that Matthew wrote his Gospel first in the Hebrew dialect (γράμμασιν Ἑβραϊκοῖς συντεταγμένον) and Mark was second, composing a Gospel as Peter taught. As with Papias and Clement (*HE* 2.15.2), Origen also records that Peter calls Mark his son in his first Epistle. Luke wrote his Gospel third for Gentile converts, which Paul commended, and last of all there is the Gospel of John. The parallels between Origen’s account with the testimony of Papias and other Fathers who uphold this tradition, especially regarding the order of the Gospels and the details of their formation, are self-evident. Origen, however, does not say whether the “tradition” from which he derived his information comes directly from Papias or through an intermediary.

In the following lines of his record of Origen’s account of the origins of the Gospels (*HE* 6.25.7-10) Eusebius’ source is the fifth book of Origen’s writings on the Gospel of John, where Origen notes the authenticity of the epistles of Paul and the first of Peter.²⁸⁶ He goes on to say that the second letter of Peter is of questionable authority before proceeding, “Why speak concerning him who reclined on the bosom of Jesus, John, who has left us one Gospel?” Origen states that John also wrote the Apocalypse and an epistle “of very few lines”; whether the second and third are genuine is still a matter of debate in Origen’s time.

This account squares with what is found in Origen’s earlier work, the *Homilies on Luke*.²⁸⁷ Here (*Hom. Luc.* 1.2) Origen states, “the church has four Gospels, the heretics [have] many...but only four Gospels are approved.” He knows of the *Gospel of Thomas* and another according to Matthias, but he goes on to repeat the claim, “But we do not approve anything unless it is approved by the church – that is, only four admitted Gospels.” For Origen, the four-fold Gospel is evidenced in the beginning of Luke’s Gospel.

Furthermore, in another fragment of the same work Origen has this to say about the Gospel of John: “There is a written record that John collected the written

²⁸⁵ This is the only extant fragment of this portion of the text.

²⁸⁶ This is the only extant fragment of this book of Origen’s *Commentary on John*.

²⁸⁷ *Comm. Matt.* 16.9 mentions *Hom. Luc.* 34. For the date of the *Homilies*, see J.T. Lienhard (trans.), *Origen: Homilies on Luke* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), xxiv.

Gospels in his own lifetime in the reign of Nero and approved as well as recognized those that the lies of the devil had not taken possession, but refused and rejected those that he deemed not to be truthful.”²⁸⁸ Origen is clearly referencing a written source, but which one? It is possible that at least portions of this information came to Origen by way of Clement of Alexandria, whose testimony approximates that of Origen when he suggests that John knew the Synoptics and having perceived that the “external facts” (τὰ σωματικά) had been made plain in the Gospels proceeded to write his own “spiritual” (πνευματικὸν) Gospel (*HE* 6.14.7). Certainly Origen employs similar language later in his hermeneutical approach to the Gospel of John (cf. πνευματικῶς...σωματικῶς; *Comm. Jo.* 10.4), yet his source may have been one from a much earlier time. Clement also notes that his information is derived from the “earliest presbyters” (ἀνεκαθεν πρεσβυτέρων; *HE* 6.14.5), which may indicate that the notice of John collecting and affirming the previous Gospels could have originated with Papias. One other possibility of Origen’s source is that it is the same one used later by Eusebius, where he notes that John accepted the Synoptic Gospels and testified to their truthfulness (*HE* 3.24.7).

Up to this point in the testimony of Origen there is general harmony with the accounts of the Gospels that had been stated before him. His testimony of the origins of the Gospels falls in step with the tradition begun by Papias and carried forward by Irenaeus and others. He agrees with Irenaeus that there are and can only be four Gospels, yet Origen cannot escape the fact that there are issues that must be addressed if he is to hold this view. Origen takes a step into previously uncharted territory when he shatters the silence surrounding the conspicuous discrepancies that are found in the chronologies of the four Gospels. The issues Origen raises do not pertain to the issue of the different beginnings of the Gospels, which was the prevailing concern by other writers such as Irenaeus, Julius Africanus and the author of the *Muratorian Fragment*. Rather, the problem for Origen lies in the fact that there are discrepancies in the Gospels surrounding some of the events of the life of Jesus. The answer Origen provides in light of these problems is to understand and interpret all four Gospels spiritually, not in the “outward, material letter.”

²⁸⁸ Greek in Fr. 4 – Ra 9 in H. Crouzel, F. Fournier and P. Périchon (eds.), *Origène Homélie sur S. Luc, Texte Latin et Fragments Grecs de M. Rauer (G.C.S.)*, SC 87 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1998), 466. English Translation from W. Schneemelcher (trans.), *New Testament Apocrypha*, revised edn., 2 vols. (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1991), I, 46.

5.2 The Differing Hermeneutical Paradigms of Origen and Epiphanius

For Origen the points of disagreement do not negate the truth found in the Gospels, nor does it take away from the fact that Scripture is harmonious and perfect (cf. *Comm. Matt.* 2 = *Philocalia* 6.1-2). How is this paradox possible? Indeed, all scripture is Gospel, but the Gospels themselves are the “first fruits of scripture” (*Comm. Jo.* 1.5); and he further declares that the Gospel of John is the first fruits of the Gospels (*Comm. Jo.* 1.6). Discrepancies are not a negating factor in the truth of the Gospels, for they convey the underlying “spiritual” meaning. Origen states, “I do not judge them if at times they freely expressed things that, to the eye of history happened differently,” for, where possible, they tried to present the truth “both spiritually and materially” (πνευματικῶς ἅμα καὶ σωματικῶς; *Comm. Jo.* 10.4). Origen then makes an appeal for his spiritual hermeneutic of the Gospels: “they intended to prefer the spiritual to the material. The spiritual truth was frequently preserved falsely in the material sense” (ἀληθοῦς πνευματικοῦ ἐν τῷ σωματικῷ ὡς ἅν ἐῖποι τις, ψευδεῖ).

Origen’s hermeneutical paradigm of Scripture can be seen clearly in his *On First Principles* 4.2.4, where he states, “Just as man consists of body, soul, and spirit, so in the same way does the Scripture.”²⁸⁹ The Scripture therefore has three senses in which it may be interpreted (literal, moral and spiritual), although Origen often emphasizes only two: the spiritual and the literal.²⁹⁰ A strictly literal exegesis can lead to error, and is seen in the use of Scripture by Basilides, Valentinus and even Satan at Jesus’ temptation (*Hom. Luc.* 31.2-3). For Origen, there are instances where the Gospels preserve a “spiritual truth” in the outward form that some may say is “a lie” (*Comm. Jo.* 10.5).²⁹¹ Elsewhere he states that the purpose of Holy Scripture is not for us to understand it in a literal sense, since some of the things it says are literally not true, but are unintelligible and impossible (*De Prin.* 4.3.4). Those who understand Scripture only in a literal sense are prone to ignorant claims and false

²⁸⁹ Cf. Keefer, 66-7. Also, see the important article by Michael W. Holmes, “Origen and the Inerrancy of Scripture,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 24/3 (Sept. 1981), 221-31, esp. 226.

²⁹⁰ See especially R.P.C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen’s Interpretation of Scripture* (London: SCM Press, 1959), 233ff.

²⁹¹ Cf. Holmes, “Origen,” 228.

opinions (*De Prin.* 4.2.4). Thus, for Origen, it is the deeper, spiritual sense that must be understood for proper interpretation.

Unsurprisingly, not everyone would agree with his method of interpretation. For example, as I shall argue in the next chapter, Eusebius, who is otherwise very supportive of Origen, counteracts his views of the incompatibility of the four Gospels through his own explanation of the differences that does not forfeit their historical veracity (cf. *HE* 3.24.5-13). He certainly knew Origen's method of allegorical interpretation, but he does not appear to endorse it, at least in regards to these discrepancies. Furthermore, Origen's argument for a spiritual hermeneutic did not resonate at all with Epiphanius. In fact, Epiphanius despised Origen's approach to Scripture.²⁹²

Epiphanius' approach to Scripture was much more literal. His primary exegetical principle may be summarized by his statement, "But all of the sacred words do not need to be bound to allegories for their meaning; they need contemplation and the perception to understand the power of each principle. But tradition must be used too, for not everything from the sacred scripture can be grasped" (*Haer.* 61.6.4-5).²⁹³ He does not mention Origen here, but there is little reason to doubt that this statement is a clear swipe against the allegorical methodology of his nemesis. Epiphanius' disdain for Origen's hermeneutic is made clear later in his *Panarion* when he includes it in his list of charges of heresy against Origen (*Haer.* 64.4.11). These two different hermeneutical approaches will become clearer as this examination proceeds to consider the ways in which both of these writers approach certain passages in the Gospel of John that do not appear to cohere with one another.

5.3 Origen and the Discrepancy Amongst the Gospels

Eusebius, a staunch supporter of Origen, only records a portion of Origen's *Commentary on John* – that which portrays his full acceptance of the four Gospels. He does *not* preserve Origen's analysis of the discrepancies that exist amongst the Gospels. Yet there is a discernible overlap between what Origen has to say about the

²⁹² For more, see Dechow, 15.

²⁹³ Cf. Merkel, *Widersprüche*, 172.

discrepancies amongst the chronologies of the Gospels in his *Commentary on John* and the objections of the so-called *Alogi* against the Gospel of John. The correlation between the two testimonies has long been recognized, but underappreciated and misunderstood. E. Schwartz was among the first to forge a link between the two, but he argues that Origen is responding to Gaius' objections to the Gospel of John.²⁹⁴ For his part, Smith, following the lead of Schwartz, devotes an underwhelming page and a half to the issue before concluding sharply that Origen knows of Gaius' rejection of the Johannine literature through (i) Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus*, (ii) Hippolytus' *Heads against Gaius*, or (iii) he learned of Gaius' views from Hippolytus on a trip to Rome in the early third-century.²⁹⁵

However, Smith misunderstands and misreads Origen's testimony. In the tenth book of his *Commentary on John*, Origen comes face to face with the Synoptic-Johannine problem; that is, Origen recognizes that there are apparent discrepancies found in the Gospel of John in comparison to the Synoptics.²⁹⁶ Even a cursory reading of Origen's account in *Comm. Jo.* 10 demonstrates that Origen is not responding to Gaius or any other person or group that would wish to reject one of the Gospels.²⁹⁷ Rather surprisingly, the inverse is true: the apparent target of Origen's criticism are, in fact, those who accept the four Gospels as historical accounts without taking into consideration the fact that they do not represent an historically coherent picture of events. In this way he draws perilously close to the positions of the *Alogi* as described by Epiphanius such that the two may, in fact, be indistinguishable.

In *Comm. Jo.* 10.1 and following, Origen aligns the position of the church, which clearly accepted the four Gospels, with the logical consequences of such a position. He argues that those who accept the four Gospels without providing an explanation of the differences that exist among them maintain an illogical and

²⁹⁴ Schwartz, "Über den Tod," 44-5. He would later retract this argument. See idem, "Johannes und Kerinthos," 212ff.

²⁹⁵ Smith, "Gaius," 195-6.

²⁹⁶ On Origen and the discrepancies amongst the Gospels, see esp. S. Laeuchli, "The Polarity of the Gospels in the Exegesis of Origen," *Church History* 21 (1952): 215-224; Hanson, 259ff.

²⁹⁷ As Laeuchli (215) notes, "The synoptic-johannine question! There can be no doubt that Origen clearly sees it and tries to reformulate it. As he says himself, he wants to show 'the discrepancy of the text.'"

incoherent position. The tradition of Papias does not provide a solution to the issues of chronological incompatibility that Origen is emphasizing.

Repeatedly throughout the tenth book of his *Commentary on John*, Origen punctuates the problem of Gospel inconsistencies. In *Comm. Jo.* 10.1, Origen quotes John's account of Jesus' trip to Capernaum and the events that occurred thereafter (Jn. 2:12-25) – namely Jesus' cleansing of the temple. He notes that the other Gospel writers speak differently, in particular that after his temptation Matthew and Luke say he went first to Nazareth and then came to Capernaum. Furthermore, only Matthew and Mark record the reason why Jesus went there: John the Baptist was cast into prison. He puts the issue plainly in the following section. In *Comm. Jo.* 10.2 Origen states, "The truth of these things must lie in that which is seen in the mind. If the discrepancy between the Gospels is not solved, we must give up our trust in the Gospels as being true and written by a divine Spirit, or as records worthy of credence, for these works are said to possess both these characteristics."

Origen goes on to specify the problem in a way that bears a striking resemblance to the first objection of the *Alogi*. He states,

They say – those who accept the four Gospels (οἱ παραδεχόμενοι τὰ τέσσαρα εὐαγγέλια), and who suppose that the discrepancy (διαφωνίαν) is not to be resolved through anagogical interpretation (διὰ τῆς ἀναγωγῆς) – they will have to explain the difficulty noted beforehand, about the forty days of the temptation, a period for which there is no room that can be found in the account of John, (and) when the Lord came into Capernaum (*Comm. Jo.* 10.2).²⁹⁸

There is no indication that Origen derives the substance of this criticism from any previous source, nor does he provide a solution.²⁹⁹ The view of the Church –

²⁹⁸ Cécile Blanc, *Origène, Commentaire sur Saint Jean. Tome II (Livres VI et X)*. SC 157 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1970), 386. Smith's misreading of Origen, noted above, can be seen clearly in his translation of *Comm. Jo.* 10.2, where he portrays Origen's comments regarding the issue of John's omission of Jesus' temptation as originating from a group. His translation is as follows (italics indicate his errors): "For they – those persons who accept the four gospels and who think that the apparent contradiction cannot be resolved anagogically – they will have to give us an explanation *in addition to* the passages we noted earlier, for *their* criticism of the forty-day temptation for which no place can be found in John's account, (and) when the Lord was in Capernaum" (italics mine). Smith, "Gaius," 196. Smith's translation is incoherent in that "they" cannot be both those who think the four Gospels are not contradictory *and* those who criticize John's account for not containing the temptation. The Greek text of this passage runs thus: Λεγέτωσαν γὰρ ἡμῖν οἱ παραδεχόμενοι τὰ τέσσαρα εὐαγγέλια, καὶ τὴν δοκοῦσαν διαφωνίαν οἰόμενοι μὴ λύεσθαι διὰ τῆς ἀναγωγῆς, πρὸς ταῖς προειρημέναις ἡμῖν ἐπαπορήσεσιν περὶ τῶν τεσσαρεσῶντα τοῦ πειρασμοῦ ἡμερῶν οὐδαμῶς δυναμένων χώραν ἔχειν παρὰ τῷ Ἰωάννῃ, πότε γέγονεν ἐν τῇ Καφαρναοὺμ ὁ κύριος. SC 157, 386.

²⁹⁹ I am unable to discern where Smith ("Gaius," 96) derives his information when he states, "Origen himself proposes a solution and, in fact, places the events of Jn. 2-3 between the temptation and John's arrest." There is no instance of Origen making this claim and it does not fit with his overall purpose in this portion of his *Commentary on John*. There is, however, one other place where Origen

that the Gospels are inspired by the Spirit and historically accurate – is not self evident when one sees how these Gospels differ. Here, even Tatian’s attempt at a harmonization of the four Gospels simply ignores the Johannine placement of the cleansing of the temple in preference for the triple tradition of the Synoptics, even though, it has been argued, Tatian followed the Johannine chronology more closely than any other Gospel.³⁰⁰ For Origen, the story of the cleansing of the temple most likely never occurred.³⁰¹

Origen goes on in the same section to state that if Jesus went to Capernaum after the six days that constitute the period of his baptism, the sixth day being the wedding at Cana of Galilee, then it is obvious the temptation never took place, and that He was never in Nazareth and that John was not yet put into prison. After this he continues to chronicle the subsequent events listed in the Gospel of John. He mentions the Passover, when Jesus went to Jerusalem, when Jesus cleansed the temple and when he encountered Nicodemus. He then returns to the issue of when Jesus was at Capernaum.

But if we ask when Christ was in Capernaum the first time, they will say to us, according to the words of Matthew and the other two, it was after the temptation, when ‘leaving Nazareth He came and stayed in Capernaum next to the sea.’ But how can they claim both the account of Matthew and Mark be true – that it was on account of Him hearing that John was delivered up that he withdrew into Galilee – and that according to John, [which states] after a number of other events than just His stay at Capernaum alone, namely His going up to Jerusalem, and His journey from there to Judea, that John was not yet cast into prison, but was baptizing in the Aenon near Salim?” (*Comm. Jo.* 10.2)³⁰²

does provide a different explanation to this dilemma. In *Hom. Luc.* 29.6 he notes that after careful consideration he has arrived at a solution: John’s starting point was Jesus’ divine nature, and since he was talking about God, and God cannot be tempted, he excluded the temptation narrative. The Synoptics, on the other hand, relay Jesus’ generation as a man, and thus include the temptation. Regarding the discrepancy of the accounts John versus that of the Synoptics Laeuchli (216) says, “Origen had two ways out of this blind alley: he could either choose one of the two versions as the true one by negating the historicity of the other – this would have been a question of probability and personal decision – or he had to deny the historicity of both versions. Origen chose the second.” He did this through his anagogical hermeneutic, as expressed in *Comm. Jo.* 10.4-5. For further discussion, see Hanson, 272-4.

³⁰⁰ For Tatian’s proclivity towards the Johannine chronology in his *Diatessaron*, see Perrin, “Diatessaron,” 302ff. Cf. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 227; also Grant, *Earliest Lives*, 23-6, who argues that Tatian did not favor the Johannine order.

³⁰¹ “There can be no doubt that in his *Commentary on John* he declares, circumspectly but explicitly, his entire disbelief in the historical reality of the Cleansing of the Temple by Jesus and his Entry into Jerusalem as described by all four evangelists.” Hanson, 267.

³⁰² *SC* 157, 388-90.

As if this were not enough, Origen pushes the issue of Gospel incompatibility further. He proceeds:

And there are many other points where, if someone carefully scrutinizes the Gospels concerning their historical disagreement, (τὰ εὐαγγέλια περὶ τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἱστορίαν ἀσυμφωνίας) – we will try to present each as they happen, insofar as we are able – he will surely become dizzy and will either shrink from confirming the Gospels as true, and choose one of them at random since he would not dare to deny completely the faith concerning our Lord, or accept that there are four <and inquire> that their truth is not to be found in the outward characteristics (σωματικοῖς χαρακτηρσιν; *Comm. Jo.* 10.2).³⁰³

In the following section (*Comm. Jo.* 10.3), Origen proceeds to further clarify his point. As an example, Origen poses the situation of multiple witnesses reporting an event in which different, conflicting details are provided, such as one witness saying that Jesus was sitting and another claiming that he was standing while giving the same speech. Those who consider the four Gospels to be accurate records of history must, in light of such similar evidence in the accounts of the Gospels, deem it impossible that the four Gospel writers are speaking historical truths.

5.4 Origen and the First Criticism of the *Alogi*

As Schwartz, Smith and others have noted, there are unmistakable similarities between the first objection of the so-called *Alogi* and what Origen records, but there is no reason to presume that his criticism is derived from anywhere else as Laeuchli has demonstrated. Rather, as Hill notes, Epiphanius may have used this criticism directly in his testimony of the *Alogi*.³⁰⁴ Origen's criticism centers on the fact that the Gospel of John leaves no room for the forty days of the temptation (*Comm. Jo.* 10.2). If we recall the nature of the first objection by the so-called *Alogi* (*Haer.* 51.4.5-10, 17.11-18.1), we find that the substance of the objection is identical.

But they say that the Gospel according to John is non-canonical (ἀδιάθετον) since it did not mention these things – I am speaking about the events of the forty-day temptation – and they do deem it worthy of being accepted, since they are deceived about everything and mentally blind (*Haer.* 51.18.6).³⁰⁵

Yet Origen is also concerned with additional discrepancies between John and the Synoptics beyond just the omission of the temptation narrative in the Fourth Gospel. If it is indeed true that Origen's notice is tied to the objection of the so-

³⁰³ *SC* 157, 390.

³⁰⁴ Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 188-9

³⁰⁵ *GCS* 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 275-6.

called *Alogi*, one should be able to detect clear traces of engagement by Epiphanius with these added elements of his testimony. In addition to his criticism that John omits the forty-day temptation, Origen also emphasizes the following issues.

(i) If these discrepancies are not resolved, it is necessary to give up trust in the Gospels as being true and written by a divine spirit.

(ii) It must be made clear when the Lord went to Capernaum. If it was six days after Jesus' baptism, then:

(ii.a) the temptation never took place,

(ii.b) he was never at Nazara,³⁰⁶ and

(ii.c) John was not yet delivered up (into prison).

(iii) Regarding when Jesus was first in Capernaum, how can the statements of the Synoptics and John both be true, for

(iii.a) The Synoptics say it was after the temptation that Jesus went to Capernaum because he heard *John was imprisoned*, and yet

(iii.b) The Gospel of John has Jesus in Capernaum, but John was not yet cast into prison, but baptizing in the Aenon near Salim

Such are the additional concerns of Origen. Though Epiphanius does not include all these specific points in the objection of the *Alogi*, it is clear that he goes out of his way to address them throughout his response. By demonstrating that Epiphanius addresses all the concerns Origen raises, it will be shown that Origen is at least included in his source material for the first criticism of the *Alogi*, if not fully constitutional of it.

Epiphanius' Response in Comparison to Origen's Criticism

Epiphanius' first line of defense is to show that there are indeed differences in the Gospels, but that does not mean that they are incompatible. He points to the different beginnings of all four and provides a lengthy exposition of each (*Haer.* 51.4.11-13.6), tackling various issues along the way,³⁰⁷ before addressing the first

³⁰⁶ Origen uses the word "Nazara" (Ναζαροις) rather than the typical "Nazareth".

³⁰⁷ E.g. the criticisms that he associates with Porphyry, Celsus and Philosabbatius (*Haer.* 51.8.1ff.) as well as the views of Ebion and Cerinthus (*Haer.* 51.12.3ff.)

criticism of the so-called *Alogi*: John's omission of Jesus' temptation. Finally, in *Haer.* 51.13.7ff. Epiphanius mounts his defense against the first objection by arguing that Jesus actually made *multiple trips* to the Jordan where he encountered John the Baptist. He argues that this is seen in the fact that John speaks of Jesus in the past tense: "This is He of whom I *said* to you... (Jn. 1:29); "John *bore* witness... saying 'I *saw* the Spirit'..." (Jn. 1:30). For Epiphanius, these examples demonstrate the fact that "John is speaking of two different times as already having happened, in order to point out that this is not the same time as that of the baptism, but a different one. For Jesus did not immediately go from the temptation to John, but he first went to Galilee and then from Galilee to the Jordan" (*Haer.* 51.13.9-10). In other words, the events of the baptism of Jesus and the temptation had happened earlier; John simply did not feel compelled to speak of these things since the other Gospels already mentioned them.

If Epiphanius were to stop here, his argument could have been seen as sufficient in combating the first objection of the *Alogi*, but Epiphanius proceeds to argue that John records other trips to the Jordan that the Synoptics had not recorded. This explains the confusion: the account recorded in the Gospel of John of Jesus and John the Baptist meeting at the Jordan river was not their first; it was actually a return trip after the forty day temptation as the Synoptic Gospels indicate (*Haer.* 51.13.7).

But Epiphanius has more to say, and here is where it is clear that his testimony matches up with the additional concerns of Origen. Epiphanius repeatedly describes the sequence of events that occurred *after* the temptation (*Haer.* 51.15.1-7, 51.16.1-9, 51.17.2-9, 51.20.1-21.13, 51.21.14-21, 51.30.4-13).³⁰⁸ This is seen clearly in *Haer.* 51.21.14-21. Here it is worth quoting Epiphanius at length,

(14) Heresies like these are overthrown by the truth and accuracy of sacred scriptures, especially by the harmony of the four Gospels. For no one who is thinking correctly would reject the things from the Holy Spirit (which are) given accurately through the sacred Gospels. (15) For even though they say (λέγουσιν) that the evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke set out in detail that the Savior was brought to the desert after the baptism, and that he spent forty days in temptation, and after the temptation heard of John's imprisonment and went to live at Capernaum by the sea – (16) but (they then say) that John is lying (ψεύδεται) because he did not speak about this, but that the Savior immediately came to John (the Baptist), and all the other things he says [Jesus] did. Their total ignorance of the Gospel's precise words will be evident. (17) For John the Evangelist makes it known that, before the arrest of John the Baptist, after the days of

³⁰⁸ Although Epiphanius' account itself is not entirely harmonious. Here, see Smith, "Gaius," 539ff.

the temptation of the Lord, [the Lord] had gone to him <again> (αὐθις). If John had been imprisoned, how did the Savior still return to him at the Jordan? (18) But they also do not know that the other three evangelists give an accurate account of the time after John's imprisonment, saying, 'But Jesus, hearing that John was cast into prison, leaving Nazareth behind, settled in Capernaum which is upon the seacoast.' And you see that everything the four evangelists said is according to the truth and harmonious. (19) For it is clear that John follows the order already laid out clearly [by the Synoptics] when he says that, after performing the Savior's first miracle and having gone to Capernaum and performed certain miracles there, and going back to Nazareth and having read the scroll, then afterwards, when John the Baptist was imprisoned, he went and dwelled in Capernaum for 'not many days' (Jn. 2:12). (20) These are the days after the Epiphany, Christ's journey to Capernaum and Nazareth, his pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Passover, and <his> coming again to John, where he was baptizing at Aenon <near> Salim. (21) For it says, 'After this he went down into Capernaum, he and his mother and his brothers, and they remained there not many days' (Jn. 2:12). (He was not yet referring to Jesus' final stay [in Capernaum], of which later on he said <that> *after* John's imprisonment he went to dwell in Capernaum by the sea) (*Haer.* 51.21.14-21).³⁰⁹

A number of links between the testimonies of Origen and Epiphanius are immediately visible. First, Epiphanius has addressed each of the issues raised by Origen. Furthermore, he is also clearly responding to criticisms that are not articulated in the objection of the *Alogi*, for he begins his defense with the phrase "they say" (λέγωσιν; *Haer.* 51.21.15) followed by what amounts to a reiteration of Origen's additional criticisms surrounding Jesus' baptism, temptation, trip to Capernaum and Nazareth, and the imprisonment of John. Epiphanius refers again to those who hold these opinions later on when he says, "Nor do they realize..." (ἐγνώσαν; *Haer.* 51.21.18).

Given that Epiphanius' defense correlates so strongly with what Origen puts forward as problems in the chronology of the Gospels, does this mean that Hill is correct in arguing that Origen is Epiphanius' source for this criticism of the *Alogi*? It is not difficult to see how Origen's solution to the problems of the absence of the temptation narrative in John and the confusion over Jesus' trips to Capernaum would not have satisfied Epiphanius.³¹⁰ An examination of the criticism itself will bring further clarity to the issue.

Analysis of the First Criticism of the Alogi

There is good reason to believe that Epiphanius is not citing verbatim an actual criticism that he found in an earlier source, either written or oral. For instance,

³⁰⁹ *GCS* 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 280-1.

³¹⁰ See also Hill, *Johannine Corpus* 188-9.

Epiphanius presents the first objection two or three times, each time it is portrayed differently. In the first instance we read, “John’s books do not agree with the other apostles” (*Haer.* 51.4.5), followed by a recitation of the beginning verses of John and concluding with the statement that “the other evangelists say that he spent forty days in the wilderness tempted by the devil” (*Haer.* 51.4.10). The second time he presents this objection, it is seasoned with a different flavor. Here one finds other elements that are added to the objection, such as the Synoptic account of Jesus’ flight into Egypt to escape Herod and the accusation that the Gospel of John “lies” and is “non-canonical” (ἁδιάθετον) because it does not mention these events – that is, the forty day temptation (*Haer.* 51.17.11-18.6). In this instance it appears that Epiphanius has attached to the first objection the issues raised in his discussion about Porphyry, Celsus and Philosabbatius, who remark on the discordant portrayal of events immediately after Jesus’ birth (*Haer.* 51.8.1-4). The first objection makes a third informal appearance where the absence of Jesus’ temptation in the Gospel of John is portrayed in terms of Jesus’ interactions with John the Baptist and the chronology surrounding his imprisonment, which has been shown to be an additional issue raised by Origen (*Haer.* 51.21.15-17).

There are other examples of Epiphanius formulating other, subtle criticisms and placing them in the mouth of the *Alogi*. In *Haer.* 51.6.14 he records this objection concerning the Gospel of Mark: “Behold, here is a second Gospel concerning the signs of Christ, and nowhere does it say that His generation is from above, but, *they say* (φησὶν), ‘the Spirit descended upon Him in the Jordan...’” Clearly this criticism is directed at the Gospel of Mark, not John; nevertheless it reflects the larger scope of Gospel discrepancies found in Epiphanius’ testimony of the so-called *Alogi*.

Not surprisingly, Smith has argued that this particular notice, though not originating with Gaius, actually came to Epiphanius from an Hippolytan source dealing with the views of Cerinthus; yet he offers no evidence to support this claim.³¹¹ However, Smith may be partially correct in the end. The views of Cerinthus and the Ebionites concerning Jesus’ baptism represent a prominent feature in Epiphanius’ rebuttal to the first criticism against John, but there is no reason to presume that they necessarily originated from Hippolytus. In any case, much of what

³¹¹ Smith, “Gaius,” 232, 289, n.1.

Hippolytus says about Cerinthus and the Ebionites (*Ref.* 8.21-22) is repeated from what Irenaeus had said earlier (*AH* 1.26.1-2). As in the case mentioned above (*Haer.* 51.17.11-18.6), where Epiphanius recites this first objection with added elements, it appears that Epiphanius is simply manufacturing an additional aspect of the criticism of the *Alogi* that emphasizes the views held by adoptionists like Cerinthus and the Ebionites, whom Epiphanius also refutes in his rebuttal to the *Alogi*.

Given the variations that exist in the portrayal of the criticisms Epiphanius presents, it is unlikely that he is not quoting any actual objection. He freely alters the content and scope of the criticism to facilitate the heretical opinions that he wants to contest. It is apparent, then, that the first objection itself is not a direct quote by Epiphanius from a source, rather it is an open-ended objection that is based upon the criticisms found in Origen's *Commentary on John*. The focus now turns to the second criticism of the *Alogi* and whether the views of Origen have any bearing there as well.

5.5 Origen and the Second Criticism of the *Alogi*

Both Schwartz and Smith missed an important piece of evidence in their attempts to draw a connection between the testimonies of Epiphanius and Origen. However, Hill has again pointed out that further along in the tenth book of his *Commentary on John*, Origen makes another allegation of Gospel incompatibility, this time touching on the number of Passovers and trips to Jerusalem by Jesus recorded in each of the Gospels.³¹²

In *Comm. Jo.* 10.14, Origen argues that it is necessary to inquire into the statement in the Gospel of John (2:13) that the Passover of the Jews was at hand and the Lord was at Capernaum with his mother, brothers and disciples. In contrast to what the Gospel of John records, Origen notes that all of the Passover accounts come much later in the narratives of the Synoptic Gospels. In *Comm. Jo.* 10.15 he proceeds to note that the number of Passovers recorded in John's Gospel does not match that recorded by the Synoptics. As Hill notes, this is remarkably similar to the second objection of the *Alogi*.³¹³

³¹² Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 189.

³¹³ Ibid.

Origen provides long quotations from the Synoptic Gospels (Mt. 21:1-13; Mk. 11:1-11, 15-17; Lk. 19:29-46), each of which describes Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and cleansing of the temple, which is portrayed by the Synoptics as a catalytic event in the Passion sequence that follows. Origen then contrasts the portrayal of the same events in John. Here, the story is divided into two parts: the first being that of Jesus cleansing the temple in Jerusalem, which John presents as being a very early event in the ministry of Jesus and his first Passover (Jn. 2:13-17); the second being Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem some time later (Jn. 12:12-15) and the events just prior to Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem where he had supper in Bethany six days before the Passover at which Martha served and Lazarus was at the table (Jn. 12:1-8). Origen continues,

I have cited lengthy sections from the Gospels, but I think it has been necessary to do so in order to render the stated discrepancy. Three Gospels place these events, which are assumed to be the same as those written by John, as occurring in *one* journey of the Lord to Jerusalem. But John places them in connection with *two* visits, which are divided from each other, in between which there were many acts of the Lord and journeys made to other places. Therefore, I find it impossible for those who accept nothing other than the history in their interpretation to admit that these discrepancies are in agreement. And if someone thinks that we have not provided a sound exposition, let him produce an intelligent rebuttal to our view (*Comm. Jo.* 10.15).³¹⁴

Origen's primary emphasis is to show the disagreement of the Gospels through the divergent placement of the cleansing of the Temple in John's sequence of Jesus' ministry. As with the first objection of the *Alogi*, there is no mention of this problem in Epiphanius, perhaps because Epiphanius did not have a ready answer. Nevertheless, there is a point of contact between the testimonies of Epiphanius and Origen that should be noted. When Origen states, "Three of the Gospels place *these incidents...*" he is clearly including the Passovers, as indicated in the preceding context of *Comm. Jo.* 10.14 as well as 10.15. According to the Synoptics, "these incidents" correspond to *one* trip of Jesus to Jerusalem, while John connects them with *two*. We find a very similar argument in the second objection of the so-called *Alogi*: "Again they accuse the holy evangelist, more so the Gospel itself, because, he says (φησί), 'John said that the Savior kept two Passovers over a two-year period, but the other evangelists describe one Passover'" (*Haer.* 51.22.1).

Again, Origen issues a challenge to those who maintain that these apparently incompatible accounts could be viewed as historically harmonious. In order to be

³¹⁴ Emphases mine. *SC* 157, 464.

proven wrong, Origen requires a “reasoned rebuttal.” As Hill notes, Epiphanius’ response to the second objection, “could be seen as a ‘reasoned rejoinder’! Epiphanius shows from a detailed ‘history’ of Gospel events how ‘everything is said truthfully and in agreement by the four evangelists’ (51. 21. 18). When Epiphanius cites the second objection of the Alogi against John, we seem to hear echoes of Origen’s voice.”³¹⁵

Hill is on to something, and it is entirely possible, if not probable, that Epiphanius is once again constructing an objection to the Johannine Gospel based on what he has read in Origen’s *Commentary on John* and the challenges that Origen poses to those who use only an historical interpretation. Moreover, in Epiphanius’ condemnation of Origen (*Haer.* 64), Epiphanius issues a similar counter-challenge to those who believe as Origen does, almost as though he has taken his cue from Origen himself. Epiphanius states, “But if anyone has an answer to all this, come on! If someone <wishes> to counteract God, do it!” (*Haer.* 64.70.20).

There are, of course, other issues that Epiphanius notes in his response to the second criticism that do not pertain to the testimony of Origen. In the previous chapter it was shown that Epiphanius is also determined to correct the testimony of Irenaeus in his attempt to discredit the Valentinians. This is very much in line with his construction of the first criticism of the so-called *Alogi* in which he uses the discrepancies of Origen as its foundation, and upon which he builds various cases against other theological adversaries such as the Ebionites and Cerinthus, Porphyry and others.

5.6 Schwartz and Smith on Origen and Gaius of Rome

The criticisms of the *Alogi* against the Gospel of John most likely originated with Origen, yet it has been noted that Schwartz and Smith have argued that Origen is simply recording the same criticisms of Gaius, which he somehow picked up along the way. There are a number of reasons why this is improbable.

First, and most importantly, these issues that Origen mentions in regards to the incompatibility of the narrative of John with that of the Synoptics reflect *his own* views and analysis. He makes similar observations elsewhere, as evidenced in a

³¹⁵ Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 190.

letter of his to Aristides, where, according to Jerome (*De vir. ill.* 63), Origen devotes much of his attention to the genealogical discrepancies in Matthew and Luke. He also points out other areas of Scriptural inconsistency, such as the number of sandals of Jesus that John the Baptist said he was not worthy to untie (*Comm. Jo.* 6.21), and the discrepancies in John's narrative of Jesus' cleansing of the Temple (*Comm. Jo.* 10.15).³¹⁶ If the criticisms stated by Origen were views held by another person such as Gaius or a group such as the *Alogi*, it would be natural to expect to find some indication that he cites these issues as belonging to a separate party, as he does in the case of Heracleon's exegesis of the Gospel of John and Celsus' views in his *Contra Celsum*. It is true that Origen was aware of the disharmony of the Gospels (e.g. *C. Cels.* 2.27), but evidence of the issue of Gospel discrepancies – particularly the different beginnings – is also attested broadly elsewhere in places such as Irenaeus, the *Muratorian Fragment*, Eusebius, Julius Africanus and others. Indeed, the Gospels' disharmony may have been a motivating factor of Tatian's *Diatessaron*. To claim that Origen had acquired privileged information that originated only from Gaius of Rome or a small, otherwise-unattested group known as the *Alogi* is to underestimate the scope of the issue. There is, in fact, no indication in his testimony that he derives these issues from a source, either oral or written, nor do we find any particular notice concerning the discrepancy over the Johannine omission of the temptation in any of the other early Patristic writings.

Secondly, there is the less persuasive argument of Schwartz and Smith that Origen was made aware of these criticisms from an encounter with Hippolytus, who would have relayed his opposition to Gaius on these matters.³¹⁷ Smith concedes that Origen did not have a copy of Hippolytus' lost *Defense* in front of him, thus making this chance meeting the only opportunity for him to learn of the troubles caused by Gaius.³¹⁸ Jerome mentions the only known encounter between these two, which he says occurred when Origen attended a church service of Hippolytus during the episcopate of Zephyrinus (*De vir. ill.* 61). He claims to have learned about the meeting of Origen and Hippolytus by reading one of the latter's works, *On the Praise of our Lord and Savior*, in which Hippolytus claims to have been speaking in the presence of Origen. But given the title, this is hardly the topic in which he would

³¹⁶ For more examples and further analysis, see Hanson, *Allegory*, 260ff.

³¹⁷ Schwartz, "Über den Tod," 44/45; Smith, "Gaius," 196.

³¹⁸ Smith, "Gaius," 403-4, n. 1.

have discussed Gaius' supposed anti-Johannine rhetoric. It should also be noted that having read this work, Jerome still felt comfortable including Gaius in his work on *Illustrious Men* (*De vir. ill.* 59). Had the topic of Hippolytus' work been a polemic against Gaius and his rejection of the Johannine materials, it is safe to presume Jerome may not have included Gaius' name in this catalogue. Furthermore, Jerome is silent on whether Hippolytus records anything about actually meeting Origen, let alone the content of their exchange. To follow Schwartz and Smith, one must believe that in their brief time together Hippolytus relayed to Origen Gaius' negative views of the Gospel of John; but there is nothing to indicate that the encounter – if it did actually occur – had anything to do with Gaius.

Even the flimsy evidence that could be construed as supporting the view of Smith and Schwartz is not without problems. As Marcovich notes, Jerome mistook Eusebius' notice (*HE* 6.23.1) that Ambrose encouraged Origen to write commentaries on the Scriptures, and suggested that it was Hippolytus who made such an appeal (*De vir. ill.* 61).³¹⁹ Later writers, including Sophronius, the translator of *De viris illustribus* into Greek, and Photius (*Bibl.* 121), appear to have further misread Jerome's own misreading of Eusebius, when they claim Hippolytus was an imitator of Origen.³²⁰ Photius reverses the direction of influence, claiming that it was actually Hippolytus that demanded so many works of Origen that the latter referred to the former as a "hustler" in one of his letters.

Eusebius states that Origen was only in Rome briefly before returning to his duties of catechetical instruction in Antioch (*HE* 6.14.10-11), and he does not mention that the Origen ever met Hippolytus, let alone that he attended a service by Hippolytus in Rome. Presumably, an encounter between Origen and Hippolytus would have been the subject of much attention, but absolutely nothing is said about this anywhere, even in the later accounts that have clearly inflated Eusebius' account. Is it fair to assume all of this about Origen's time in Rome? Smith seems to think so, since, without providing *any* further evidence, he hastily concludes, "In any case it is clear that Origen knew of Gaius' argument against Jn. 1-2."³²¹

³¹⁹ Marcovich, 9.

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ Smith, "Gaius," 196

Third, if Origen is responding to the views of Gaius as Smith suggests, then one would anticipate finding some additional information from Origen pertaining to the Apocalypse of John as well. Yet Origen makes no allusion to the fact that the Apocalypse is not authoritative and there is no extant record of Origen that contains any objections to it at all. Moreover, given Gaius' reputation as an opponent of Montanism, if Origen drew these criticisms from Gaius there would presumably be some element of an anti-Montanist polemic or anti-Johannine rhetoric couched in terms that suggest some degree of reticence concerning John's Paraclete passages or prophecy in general. But Origen does not provide any of this. Instead, the evidence supports Laeuchli's argument that Origen expresses *his own* views.

Finally, much has been made of the fact that Epiphanius records the objections against John as originating from an individual rather than a group of heretics. This is in reference to two brief deviations from the use of the plural form in Epiphanius' record of some of the objections. In both objections to the Gospel of John (*Haer.* 51.4.6, 22.1) Epiphanius introduces these criticisms with the singular "he says" (φησίν). According to Smith, this is proof positive that behind this heretical "group" there is a single individual: Gaius of Rome.³²² Yet the same argument can be made that Epiphanius' use of the singular points towards Origen, not Gaius. Furthermore, the use of the singular in his portrayal of the criticisms in conjunction with the use of the plural elsewhere in his testimony could suggest a two-pronged indictment: Origen *as well as* those who followed him or share sympathetic views are guilty of denying the Johannine Logos. They are *Alogi*.

Smith notes that there exist a variety of accounts in which some attack apparent inconsistencies in Scripture in order to discredit them.³²³ He goes on to argue, "In none of these writings hwoever [sic] are the contradictions reported as precisely as those of Gaius."³²⁴ The emphasis on precision is a worthwhile point, but it does not work in Smith's favor. In fact, the *Alogi*'s objections against the Gospel of John, have stronger parallels to those found in Origen's *Commentary on John* than what bar Salibi supposedly records of the "heretic" in his own *Commentary on John*.

³²² "Our conclusion is that Epiphanius is extracting these quotations from a source in which the objections were attributed to one single individual, who is Gaius himself!" Smith, "Gaius," 233.

³²³ E.g. Justin's Trypho (*Dial.* 66-7); Rhodon's dialogue with Apelles (*HE* 5.13.6, 9); Marcion's argument against the Old Testament because it contradicted the Gospel (*viz.* *his* Gospel).

³²⁴ Smith, "Gaius", 286.

For example, bar Salibi notes, “The heretic Gaius criticized John because it did not agree with the other Gospels, saying that after the baptism He went to Galilee and performed the miracle of the wine in Cana.”³²⁵ Generally speaking, this objection conforms to that of the so-called *Alogi*, though it is important to remember that the name “Gaius” is wanting in both of the manuscripts of bar Salibi’s commentary that are housed in the British Library (MSS Add. 7184 and 12,143), leaving the origins of this objection anonymous: “A certain heretic criticized John...”³²⁶ However, Origen specifies his criticism in a way that concurs with the more precise nature of the *Alogi*’s objection. Origen states that John is incompatible with the Synoptics in regards to the time of Jesus’ baptism because, he explicitly says, *it omits the story of Jesus’ temptation*. Likewise, the *Alogi* are concerned with the lack of the temptation narrative in John’s Gospel (*Haer.* 51.18.6). Furthermore, bar Salibi does not record anything about the number of Passovers in John versus the number recorded in the Synoptics. Long ago, this fact proved problematic for Harris, who preceded Schwartz in suggesting that Gaius must be the source for both these criticisms. Despite the fact there was no evidence linking Gaius or bar Salibi with this second objection, Harris nevertheless surmised, “certainly Hippolytus must have dealt with the objection made by the *Alogi* on the subject of the Passovers.”³²⁷ But if this were the case, and if bar Salibi used Hippolytus’ refutation of Gaius as his source, why did bar Salibi not mention it at all? In contrast, it has been demonstrated that Origen raised a similar objection (*Comm. Jo.* 10.14-15) that corresponds well with the second criticism of the *Alogi* (*Haer.* 51.22.1). Origen’s fingerprints are clearly visible in these objections.

What does one make of this? Epiphanius’ testimony is void of anything that would resemble anti-Montanism with which Gaius was so clearly concerned. Rather, the evidence points in another direction: Epiphanius’ testimony is saturated with anti-Origenist polemics. There are numerous other examples throughout the account of the *Alogi* to demonstrate this.

³²⁵ My translation. “*Gaius haereticus reprehendat Johannem quia non concors fuit cum sociis, dicentibus, quod post baptismum abiit in Galilaeam, et fecit miraculum vini in Katna.*” Latin translation by Dudley Loftus, *Fell. MSS.* 6 and 7 in the Bodleian Library; recorded in Harris, 48.

³²⁶ See Harris, 48-9.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 55.

5.7 Other Examples of Anti-Origenism in Epiphanius' Account of the *Alogi*

There are a number of additional instances that demonstrate that Epiphanius is engaged with the testimony of Origen in his account of the *Alogi*. Indeed, J. F. Dechow has argued that the focal point of the entirety of Epiphanius' *Panarion* is a polemic against Origen. He states, "Epiphanius was sure that Origen was the epitome and exemplar of all heresies from the beginning of time," and furthermore, "All heresies, in Epiphanius' mind, are ultimately related to the mode or content of Origen's thought and to some degree diminish that which the creed with its *homoousion* expresses: the reality of the triune God; specifically, the fully divine and fully human reality of Jesus Christ, God's Son, the Savior."³²⁸ Lest one think Dechow overstates his case, it is important to note that Epiphanius himself makes it abundantly clear. For example, Jerome preserves a letter in which Epiphanius makes the identical claim in his correspondence with John, Bishop of Jerusalem, where he claims Origen to be the parent of all heresies (*Ep. 51*, 3-4). Here Epiphanius calls Origen the "spiritual father of Arius" and the "root and parent of all heresies"; For Epiphanius, Origen's actions are similar to the Manichaeans, Ebionites, Marcionites and the votaries of the other eighty heresies. Epiphanius reiterates the same argument in the *Panarion* (*Haer.* 64.4.2).

Origen's Christology

One particular area of concern for Epiphanius was Origen's Christology, which is addressed in the conclusion of Epiphanius rebuttal to the first objection of the *Alogi*. Here Epiphanius recounts the story of Jn. 5:18, where the Jews persecuted Jesus because he said that God was His Father, thus making Himself *equal* to God. Epiphanius then asks, "How can the sects which make the Son inferior to the Father not be condemned? For the Gospel says 'making himself equal with God'" (*Haer.* 51.21.30). To whom is Epiphanius referring? Smith is correct in noting the Ebionites and Cerinthus, who are seen throughout his testimony.³²⁹ But it is also necessary to add Origen to this category. In fact Epiphanius makes it explicitly clear how he feels about Origen's Christology in his refutation of his enemy. Epiphanius

³²⁸ Dechow, 13.

³²⁹ Smith, "Gaius," 387.

points to his *Commentary on Psalms* as an example of his belief that Jesus was “created” (γενητός) and thus had a subordinate status to the Father (*Haer.* 64.7.4, 8.1-8).³³⁰ Epiphanius records verbatim portions of Origen’s commentary on the Psalms to demonstrate his errant Christology: “And here, immediately, is each word in such a knowledgeable manner, O eager hearer, that he declared the Son of God appeared as a creature” (*Haer.* 64.5.11). At an earlier point in his attack on Origen, Epiphanius states that his first downfall is the denial that the Son is of the same essence as the Father, but was created (κτιστόν). Rather, it is by grace that Christ is called “Son” (*Haer.* 64.4.3-4). He then goes on in *Haer.* 64.9 to argue, in much the same way as the passage noted above (*Haer.* 51.21.30):

(1) But let us see through the four Gospels, through which, when the divine Word came, revealed life to all of us, if Christ has ever said, ‘God created me,’ or ‘My Father created me!’ And let us see if the Father made known in any of the Gospels, ‘I have created the Son and have sent him to you.’ (2) But I have had enough of this for now; concerning written witnesses, I have often quoted them against those who introduce the idea of creaturehood. (3) However, it will not be annoying to show how easy the term can be refuted and I ask the would-be sage, ‘How is it possible he is a creature when it says, “I am in the Father and the Father in me, and the two of us are one”?’ (Jn. 14:10; 10:30; *Haer.* 64.9.1-3).³³¹

Here Epiphanius uses the Gospel of John to refute Origen’s Christology, for it is in this Gospel that Christ’s full deity is explicitly expressed. As he states, confusion over the incarnation of Jesus persisted even after the writing of the Synoptics, which is why the Holy Spirit compelled John to write his Gospel and emphasize both the human and divine aspects of Christ (*Haer.* 51.12.1-8). Recalling the way in which Epiphanius describes the so-called *Alogi*, Origen fits the mold perfectly. Epiphanius states, “I was correct to call this heresy Ἀλογοὶ for they do not accept the divine Word, come from above, the Word having been preached by John” (*Haer.* 51.17.10). In addition to the identical objections to the Gospel of John

³³⁰ See Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, 280 for other “creature-words” Epiphanius uses to describe Origen’s view of the Son of God, though Dechow may be right in suggesting that Epiphanius “understands Origen only in an exaggerated anti-Arian sense.” Dechow’s premise (273) is that, “Despite the decline of interest in anti-subordinationism as primary grounds for anti-Origenism by 376, Epiphanius’ accusation shows how deeply rooted such criticism was among Nicene conservatives.” As he says later (285), this is seen in that “the Arians capitalized on the *ktisma*-terminology for the sake of magnifying the distinctiveness of the Son from the unbegotten Father.” See also G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: SPCK, 1952), 131ff.

³³¹ *GCS* 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 418.

that are shared between the *Alogi* and Origen, Origen and those who followed him fit squarely with the other ways in which Epiphanius describes this heretical sect.³³²

Textual Anomalies in Origen and Epiphanius

Another example of Epiphanius' use of Origen in his account of the *Alogi* is found in a unique textual link between Origen and Epiphanius. In *Comm. Jo.* 6.24, Origen records a distinctive reading of Jn. 1:28. Here he says,

'These things happened in Bethabara (Βηθαβαρᾶ), on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.' However, we know in nearly all of the other copies (ἀντιγράφοις) it reads, 'These things happened in Bethany.' And this seems to have been the way it was rendered earlier, as in Heracleon, where we know it as 'Bethany'. But we know for sure that it is not 'Bethany', but 'Bethabara'.³³³

Origen then goes on to give geographical reasons for editing this passage to read "Bethabara" and not "Bethany".

In their work, *The Text of the Fourth Gospel in the Writings of Origen*, Ehrman, Fee and Holmes have reconstructed Origen's manuscript of John as reading: ταυτα εν Βηθανια εγενετο περαν του Ιορδανου, οπου ην Ιωαννης βαπτιζων.³³⁴ They preserved the reading of Βηθανια rather than Βηθαβαρᾶ because they "are interested in determining what Origen's MSS read, not what he, on the basis of his own scholarly work, believed the original text of the Fourth Gospel to have been."³³⁵ According to these scholars, "He himself emended Βηθανια, the reading found in his MSS of the Fourth Gospel, to Βηθαβαρᾶ." Furthermore, Origen's statement that "nearly all" other copies read Βηθανια "should probably be taken, then, as hyperbole; so far as we can tell, none of his MSS read otherwise."³³⁶

³³² Hill (*Johannine Corpus*, 189 n.60) provides an additional example, where he notes that Epiphanius (*Haer.* 51.15.7-12, 51.17.4, 9) is likely responding to Origen's discussion (*Comm. Jo.* 10.6) of the apparent discrepancy between Jesus calling Andrew and Peter in Judea after the baptism recorded by John (Jn. 1:40-42) and his calling of them in Galilee by the lake, as found in Matthew (Mt. 4:18-22).

³³³ *SC 157*, 284-6.

³³⁴ Bart Ehrman, Gordon Fee and Michael Holmes, *The Text of the Fourth Gospel in the Writings of Origen*, vol. 1 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 72. See also B. Metzger, *Historical and Literary Studies: Pagan, Jewish and Christian*, New Testament Tools and Studies, vol. 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 96-7. "Among present-day witnesses to the reading Βηθαβαρᾶ are C² K U Λ 083 1 22 33 syr^{s,c} arm geo."

³³⁵ Ehrman, et. al., 72.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, n. 22. See also T.D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (London: Harvard University Press, 1981), 109.

With this in mind attention is given to Epiphanius' statements regarding this verse. In *Haer.* 51.13.1 he states, "And when he describes all these things he says, 'These things were done in Bethabara' – but in other copies (ἀντιγράφους) 'in Bethany, beyond the Jordan'" (Jn. 1:28). Epiphanius clearly reproduces the very reading that Origen claims to have provided himself! One could argue that Epiphanius is simply using a later manuscript that had adopted Origen's use of Βηθαβαρα, but if this were the case, he would not have provided the identical notice that it reads Βηθανια in other copies (ἀντιγράφους). In his argument that Gaius is the true identity of the *Alogi*, Smith wrongly presumes this section must have come from a lost Hippolytan work,³³⁷ but in fact there can be no doubt that Epiphanius has a copy of Origen's *Commentary on John* in front of him throughout his construction of the *Alogi*. To give one final correlation between Epiphanius and Origen, Epiphanius repeats Origen's notice that Cana means "the bride" at the end of his defense of the Gospel of John (*Haer.* 51.30.10; cf. *Comm. Jo.* 13.62).

Origen's testimony in his *Commentary on John* has far too many connections with the record of Epiphanius to deny its relevance in the formation of the sect that Epiphanius calls the *Alogi*. Epiphanius has used the criticisms of his theological nemesis, the "would-be sage" (ἐθελόσοφον), as the proof-text for the criticisms of the *Alogi* against the Gospel of John. By questioning whether the Gospels were written by a divine Spirit (*Comm. Jo.* 10.2), Origen has committed the irremissible sin. He is not alone, however. Epiphanius surrounds him with other heretics that deny the full authority that belongs to the Gospels, as seen in Chapter 3. Nevertheless, it is upon Origen's criticisms regarding the validity of the historical truths of the Gospels that Epiphanius is able to build his case against all those that do not believe that the Gospels are in agreement and none of their authors disagree with one another (*Haer.* 51.30.14). Epiphanius was not the only person to respond to Origen, however. As I shall demonstrate in the next chapter, Eusebius also reacted to these opinions of Origen.

³³⁷ Smith, "Gaius", 393-4.

CHAPTER SIX

Epiphanius' Use of Eusebius

This chapter is an examination of the various elements of Eusebius' writings that appear in Epiphanius' testimony of the *Alogi*. Particular attention is given to the way in which Eusebius also responded to the criticisms of Origen, noted in the previous chapter. Not only does Eusebius provide his own rebuttal to the charges of Origen, but the evidence also points to the fact that Epiphanius uses Eusebius' rebuttal as part of his own defense against the so-called *Alogi*.

6.1 Eusebius' Order of the Gospels and the Papian Tradition (*HE* 3.24.5-13)

Although he does not explicitly indict Origen, it is apparent that Eusebius' testimony provides a defense against Origen's views that the Gospel of John disagrees with the Synoptics. As an outspoken supporter of Origen, Eusebius is careful to couch his own argument for the compatibility of the Gospels in subtle terms, so as not to impugn his hero. He accomplishes this task by manipulating the testimony of someone for which he has far less admiration: Papias of Hierapolis.

Eusebius preserves portions of the tradition of Papias concerning the origins of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, but he makes no mention of any Papian comments about Luke or John. However, Hill has argued that Eusebius' testimony concerning the origins of the Gospel of John (*HE* 3.24.5-13) actually came from Papias as well, and that Eusebius failed to ascribe it to him. Hill's argument is compelling and, generally speaking, convincing. However, it is unlikely that the entirety of this passage comes from Papias alone. Rather, it appears that Eusebius blends aspects of what Papias had to say with his own solution to the discrepancies noted by Origen. In turn, Eusebius' response to Origen was to find its way into the testimony of the *Alogi*.

Eusebius begins this portion of his account in this way: "Let us now show the undisputed writings of this apostle (John). Firstly, his Gospel, which is known to all the churches under heaven,³³⁸ must be acknowledged as genuine. That it has with

³³⁸ Cf. Origen *ap.* Eusebius (*HE* 6.25.4): "...the four Gospels, which are the only indisputable ones in the Church of God under heaven."

good reason been put by the men of old time in the fourth place, after the other three, this is evident in this manner...” (HE 3.24.1-2). After discussing the veracity and trustworthiness of the apostles, Eusebius continues to offer a similar account of the Gospel origins as found in the writings of Papias, Irenaeus and Origen.

5. Nevertheless, of all the disciples of the Lord, only Matthew and John have left us their recollections (ὑπομνήματα). A record preserves (κατέχει λόγος) that they came to write out of necessity (ἐπ’ἀνάγκης). 6. For Matthew, who first preached to the Hebrews, and when he was about to go to the others, he provided his Gospel in his native language for those from whom he was sent, in order to compensate for his lack of presence. 7. And when Mark and Luke had already written their own Gospels, John, it is said (φασί), gave a proclamation (κηρύγματι) all the time that was not written down, and finally came to write for the following reason. The three Gospels already having been written and distributed to all, as well as to himself, it is said (φασιν) that he welcomed (ἀποδέξασθαι) them and bore witness of their truth (ἀλήθειαν αὐτοῖς ἐπιμαρτυρήσαντα), but the only thing lacking was an narrative (διήγησιν) about the things done by Christ at the beginning and the outset of the proclamation (κηρύγματος). 8. The record is certainly true (καὶ ἀληθὴς γὰρ ὁ λόγος).

[8b] For it is seen that the three evangelists had written down (συγγεγραφότας) only the deeds done by the Savior during one year after the imprisonment of John the Baptist, and they indicated this at the beginning of their historical accounts (ἱστορίας). 9. For Matthew, after the forty days fast and the temptation that followed it, indicates the time of his own written account, saying, “But when he heard that John was imprisoned, he withdrew from Judea into Galilee” (Mt. 4:12). 10. And Mark in a like manner, “Now after the imprisonment of John,” he says, “Jesus came to Galilee” (Mk. 1:14). And Luke, prior to beginning the account of the deeds of Jesus, in a similar way, affirms the order up front, noting that Herod, adding to his evil acts, “shut up John in prison” (Lk. 3:19-20). 11. Now that on account of these things they say (φασί) the apostle John was exhorted (παρακληθέντα) to hand down (παραδοῦναι) in his Gospel an account of the time passed over in silence (παρασιωπηθέντα) by the first evangelists and the acts done by the Savior during this period (these being the acts before the imprisonment of the Baptist). This he indicates when he says, “This is the first of the miracles (παραδόξων) Jesus performed” (Jn. 2:11). And then, referring to (μνημονεύσαντα) the Baptist in the midst of the acts of Jesus, [John] still baptizing in the Aenon near Salim, where he states clearly, “For John was not yet cast into prison” (Jn. 3:24). 12. Therefore John in his written Gospel handed down (παραδίδωσιν) the things accomplished by Christ before John was cast into prison, but the other three evangelists recall (μνημονεύουσιν) the things after the imprisonment of the Baptist. 13. And if these things are understood, no longer do the Gospels appear to disagree with one another (δόξαι διαφωνεῖν ἀλλήλοις τὰ εὐαγγέλια), for that according to John comprises the first acts of Christ, but the rest [record] the history (ἱστορίαν) of what happened to Him at the end of the period of time (HE 3.24.5-13).³³⁹

Eusebius does not indicate where he derived this account of the order of the Gospels, but it is clear that he is drawing from a previous source. In HE 3.24.5 Eusebius remarks that “a record preserves” (κατέχει λόγος) that the Gospel writers composed their works out of necessity. H. Lawlor has shown that the phrase κατέχει

³³⁹ GCS 2.1, *Eusebius Werke*, 246-50. Because I primarily deal with Hill’s proposal in this section, and in order to maintain uniformity of the evidence, I have intentionally kept Hill’s interpretation of specific vocabulary noted parenthetically above.

λόγος is a common introductory formula for Eusebius' inclusion of a narrative of some source – either oral or written.³⁴⁰ What, then, is Eusebius' source? Some have floated the argument that it was Origen or Clement of Alexandria, although, on their own, neither is a truly viable candidate.³⁴¹ Hegesippus is a contender, particularly given the identical introductory formula (κατέχει λόγος) Eusebius uses to introduce his accounts (*HE* 3.11-12, 19; 3.32.1).³⁴² Hippolytus has also been suggested as Eusebius' source.³⁴³ This is possible, but also entirely unverifiable, since there is no evidence from any of his writings to substantiate this hypothesis. Even Sanday, who put Hippolytus' name forward as a possibility, chalked up this attribution to nothing more than a “guess” and leaned in stronger favor of Clement.

Hill, of course, argues that it originates from Papias. Although there is no extant writing from Papias with which one can compare this portion of Eusebius on the Gospel of John, the evidence does partially stack up in Hill's favor.³⁴⁴ Yet, while

³⁴⁰ Hugh J. Lawlor, *Evsebian: Essays on the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Bishop of Caesarea* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), 21-2. According to Lawlor (22), the author of the source (if written) can be determined by “a search through the passages from previous writers scattered over his pages”. See also Andrew Carriker, *The Library of Eusebius of Caesarea, VCSupp* 67 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 63ff.

³⁴¹ Smith “Gaius,” 193, n.1 notes Origen as a possibility. Hill (“What Papias Said,” 608-11) has shown that this is not possible. See also W. Sanday, *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Scribner's, 1905), 69-70, who thinks it is likely Clement of Alexandria. But Clement's record of the origins of the Gospels preserved in Eusebius *HE* 6.14, while similar in parts, has marked differences that prevent Clement from being Eusebius' source (e.g. Clement's order of the Gospels begins with Matthew and Luke). Furthermore, Clement states that he received his information from “the tradition of the earliest presbyters” (*HE* 6.14.5). In addition, Eusebius draws parallels between the account of Clement and Papias on the Gospel of Mark in *HE* 2.15.2, from which one could infer that Papias was a source of Clement. Here, see Bauckham, “Papias,” 62. For further discussion, see Hill, “What Papias Said,” 607ff.

³⁴² On the use of κατέχει λόγος in association with Hegesippus, though not specifically *HE* 3.24, see F.J.A. Hort, *Judaistic Christianity: A Course of Lectures* (Cambridge: Macmillan and Co., 1894), 170-173; Lawlor, *Evsebian*, 23-26, 50ff. Hill does not consider Hegesippus as a possible alternative source.

³⁴³ Sanday, *Criticism*, 69.

³⁴⁴ Hill, “What Papias Said,” 582-629; eadem, *Johannine Corpus*, 186, 384-395, points to the analysis of Lawlor and others to support his argument. Hill notes that he was preceded in this notion of Papian attribution by V. Bartlet, “Papias' ‘Exposition’: Its Date and Contents,” in *Amicitiae Corolla. A Volume of Essays Presented to James Rendel Harris, D. Litt. On the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. H. G. Wood (London: University of London Press, 1933), 15-44. Stanton (“Fourfold Gospel”, 333) is convinced Papias knew the Gospel of John based on his order of disciples that is found only in the Fourth Gospel. This point is shared by Richard Bauckham, “Papias,” 44ff., who also argues that “There should be no doubt that Papias knew the Fourth Gospel” (44). Bauckham (*Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 433-7) has suggested that Hill's case is solid, but in need of “qualifications”. Hill has responded (“The Orthodox Gospel”, 288-94), in which he summarily dismisses much of Bauckham's analysis. See also, Hengel (*Four Gospels*, 45-6, 238 n.192), who argues that this tradition does not belong in the second-century and that the portion on John may come from Papias or a third-century source. See also eadem, *Johannine Question*, 17-21; Lawlor,

I agree with much of Hill's argument that there is ample reason to think that Papias is behind *some* of the tradition Eusebius records in *HE* 3.24.5-13, there are clear instances where Eusebius has broken away from his source to provide *his own* response to the question of the discrepancies among the Gospels. To prove this point, it is necessary to first consider Hill's argument more carefully.

6.2 The Argument of Charles E. Hill

Hill's argument may be summarized as follows. First, it is often overlooked that in 3.24.5-13 Eusebius is paraphrasing a written account.³⁴⁵ This is seen in Eusebius' use of the phrases "a record preserves" (κατέχει λόγος; 3.24.5), "the record is certainly true" (καὶ ἀληθὴς γὰρ ὁ λόγος; 3.24.8), and the less precise "they say" (φασί; 3.24.7, 11). He argues that the phrase κατέχει λόγος is of particular value in signifying a written source.³⁴⁶ For Hill, this is none other than Papias, and he goes on to argue that the rest of the testimony in *HE* 3.24.5-13 is tied to this introduction, as is seen in the similar phrase associated with Eusebius' testimony of the Gospel of John (καὶ ἀληθὴς γὰρ ὁ λόγος; *HE* 3.24.8), which he argues is a reference to the earlier, similar statement.

There are two other primary factors Hill cites in support of Papias as Eusebius' source in *HE* 3.24.5-13. First, he notes a number of parallels that link his source in *HE* 3.24 with Papias' account of the origins of Matthew and Mark (*HE* 2.15.1-2; 3.39.15-16).³⁴⁷ Secondly, he notes parallels with other authors who knew

Evsebian, 22, n.2, though he thinks it may only apply to the material on the Gospel of Matthew. See also Campenhausen, *Formation*, 199, n. 259.

³⁴⁵ See Hill, "What Papias Said," 588-92.

³⁴⁶ Here, Hill follows Lawlor, *Evsebian*, 22. Lawlor recognized that it is a "fair inference" that Eusebius derived his information on Matthew (*HE* 3.24.5) from the accounts of Papias (*HE* 3.39.16), Irenaeus (*HE* 5.8.2), or perhaps Origen (*HE* 6.25.4); but that is as far as he would go in pointing to Papias as the full source of Eusebius' testimony in *HE* 3.24.5-13. Hill is right in noting that Eusebius attributes to this same written record both the Matthean and Johannine traditions: "A record preserves (κατέχει λόγος) that they (*viz.* Matthew and John) took to writing out of necessity" (*HE* 3.24.5).

³⁴⁷ See Hill, "What Papias Said," 592-96. He lists the following examples: (i) authorial humility, (ii) distillation of apostolic preaching, (iii) Apostolic 'memoirs' (ὑπομνήματα), (iv) order of events in the Gospels (τάξις), and (v) canonical ratification. Hill provides a summary of his own argument in *Johannine Corpus*, 385-94, 409-16; eadem, "The Fragments of Papias," in *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers*. 42-51. Ed. Paul Foster (New York: T&T Press, 2007), 46-7.

Papias' work, such as Clement of Alexandria, the *Muratorian Fragment*, Origen, Irenaeus and later Victorinus of Pettau.³⁴⁸

Finally, Hill argues that Eusebius' source could not have come from an alternative source.³⁴⁹ This is a strong case for suggesting that a lost portion of the record of Papias underlies some of Eusebius' testimony in *HE* 3.24.5-13, however there are also a number of questions that have arisen as a result of Hill's analysis.

For example, Richard Bauckham, while generally inclined towards Hill's argument, has suggested a handful of qualifications. Two of these are particularly compelling. First, he holds that Hill has not delimited Eusebius' source closely enough.³⁵⁰ Bauckham suggests Eusebius does indeed use his source in *HE* 3.24.5-8a, but there is a break from *HE* 3.24.8b-10 where Eusebius provides his own analysis. After this the source appears to be used again, as indicated by "they say" in 3.24.11, after which Eusebius again issues his own comments in *HE* 3.24.12-13. These statements may utilize some of the vocabulary of the source, but they do not strictly reflect the source itself, especially since "Eusebius can be quite free in his paraphrasing."³⁵¹

Secondly, Bauckham notes that Hill's argument regarding Papias' concern for the "order" in the Gospels, when applied to the Gospel of John, does recognize the differences between John and the Gospels; but while recognition of "order" is a common factor, the solution to each case is quite different.³⁵² He points to *HE* 3.39.15-16, where Papias admits Mark's Gospel is not "in order". The implied solution to the different order of events in the Gospels that "Papias must be inferred to have offered" is that John's Gospel follows a correct chronological order while Matthew's and Mark's do not. In contrast, in *HE* 3.24.5-13, the solution is markedly different. Here, all four are reconciled without any being considered out of order; rather the explanation given is that John wrote of the events prior to the Baptist's imprisonment and the others record the events that happened afterwards. If Eusebius' source is responsible for this explanation of the differences (*HE* 3.24.11-

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 596-607. Hill lists the following parallels: (i) writing by request, (ii) order in the Gospels, (iii) evangelists as "publishers", and (iv) the number and order of the Gospels.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 606-11.

³⁵⁰ Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 433.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Ibid., 435-7.

13), Bauckham argues, then it points in favor of the conclusion that it was *not* Papias, for it is inconsistent with aspects of Papias' comments on Mark in his undisputed fragment (*HE* 3.39.15).

In his recent essay,³⁵³ Hill has responded to Bauckham's questions. He dismisses Bauckham's point about not delimiting the source as something that he allowed for in his original argument. Hill nevertheless disregards its potential impact in calling into question whether the entirety of this passage came from Papias alone.³⁵⁴ Regarding Bauckham's second point, Hill admits that further explanation is required. He then reproduces and expands various points made in his original article before concluding, "I do not regard Bauckham's 'qualifications' as carrying any weight against the identification of Eusebius' source in *Hist. eccl.* 3.24.5-13 as Papias."³⁵⁵

However, Hill may have misjudged the value Bauckham's qualifications. First, I believe he is too quick to dismiss the issue of delimiting the text and that Bauckham's point may, in fact, stand – namely that there appear to be breaks in the text that indicate Eusebius has dropped his source. This goes hand in hand with Bauckham's second point. Although Hill makes a solid case for seeing *portions* of this testimony relating to the testimonies of others that knew the Papian tradition, he has overlooked the fact that the argument made in *HE* 3.24.8b-13 is not found anywhere else prior to Eusebius' testimony and thus may not be a part of the Papian tradition at all. Rather, I shall argue that this portion of Eusebius' testimony constitutes a response to the criticism of Johannine incompatibility with the chronology of the Synoptics, which Origen states in his *Commentary on John* (10.2).

6.3 *HE* 3.24.8b-13 as a Response to Origen?

It is clear from the previous chapter that Origen knows and affirms the Papian tradition (cf. *HE* 3.39.15-16). In light of this, if Hill's hypothesis is correct and Papias is the source for the entirety of Eusebius' account in *HE* 3.24.5-13, it makes little sense that Origen would still record the criticisms surrounding the discrepancies

³⁵³ C.E. Hill, "'The Orthodox Gospel': The Reception of John in the Great Church prior to Irenaeus", in *The Legacy of John: Second-Century Reception of the Fourth Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 288-94.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 288.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 294.

of the Gospels found in the *Comm. Jo.* 10 that are explained by this portion of Eusebius' testimony. Is it possible that although Origen was well aware of the Papian tradition, he did not know of the argument concerning the harmony of the Gospels in *HE* 3.24.5b-13 because *it was never a part of the Papian tradition at all*? A close look at the corroborating witnesses to the Papian tradition will provide clarity to this question.

Corroborating Witnesses?

If Eusebius' argument for the compatibility of the Gospels did originate with Papias, there should be some reference to this in the other testimonies that rely on his tradition. Hill notes a number of parallels with other authors who were concerned with the "order" in the Gospels and who knew Papias' work,³⁵⁶ but nowhere in these works does one find anything that resembles the argument found in *HE* 3.24.8b-13.

This is all the more surprising given the fact, which Hill repeatedly emphasizes, that the authors who knew Papias' tradition were concerned with the "order" (τάξις) in the Gospels. He states, "All accounts (Papias and those early writers who knew his work) profess themselves to be aware of the differences between John's and the other three Gospels, and the question of 'order' is present here in 3.24 as it is in Papias' account of Mark."³⁵⁷ This is true, but it does not necessarily follow that their concern for "order" extended specifically to the events surrounding the wedding in Cana and those that occurred before and after John's imprisonment. Clearly, Origen took a strong stance against the harmony of these events and they are also the focus in *HE* 3.24.11-13, not to mention Epiphanius' testimony of the *Alogi*. But, none of the other early witnesses that Hill associates with the Papian tradition address the chronological conflict of *these* events.

For example, consider the *Muratorian Fragment*, to which both Hill and Bauckham often refer as a likely source that reflects Papias' statements. In the middle of its statements concerning the Fourth Gospel, it mentions the "different beginnings"³⁵⁸ (*uaria...principia*) of the Gospels, but that these *uaria principia*

³⁵⁶ Hill, "What Papias Said," 596-606.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 597; see also his discussion 596-602.

³⁵⁸ I follow Hill's translation here. I agree with his argument (*ibid.*, 586, n. 13) that the context of the *Muratorian Fragment* suggests that *principia* should be rendered "beginnings" not "elements".

“make no difference to the faith of believers.” What follows is a list of things declared by the “one sovereign Spirit”: Jesus’ nativity, passion, resurrection, walk with His disciples and double advent. No mention is made of Jesus’ temptation, baptism or first miracle.³⁵⁹ This is striking, especially given Bauckham’s statement that “the differences between John and the Synoptics” was something that the author of the *Muratorian Fragment* “was particularly conscious of.”³⁶⁰ It is also notable that all the other early writers who knew Papias’ testimony fail to note these specific issues raised by Eusebius. Rather, the predominant concern among those who appear reliant upon the Papian tradition is the very beginnings of the Gospels. It is seen, for example, in Irenaeus (*AH* 3.11.8), Tertullian (*Adv. Marc.* 4.2) and Julius Africanus’ defense of the different genealogical accounts of Matthew and Luke (*HE* 1.7.1).

Indeed, out of all these possibilities Irenaeus would presumably be our best bet for a source that contained any indication of Papias having recorded what is found in *HE* 3.24.8b-13, due to the fact that he had the writings of Papias in front of him (*AH* 5.33.4; *HE* 3.39.1) and he was well acquainted with the Asia Minor tradition both personally and through the knowledge he gained from Polycarp. Yet where one might expect to find such a testimony, such as Irenaeus’ discussion of the events surrounding Jesus’ baptism and miracle at Cana (*AH* 2.22) and his argument for the necessity of a four-fold Gospel (*AH* 3.11), there is no hard evidence that he knew of the account found in *HE* 3.24.8-13.³⁶¹

³⁵⁹ Hill argues (*ibid.*, 597) that Eusebius quotes Jn. 2:11 in *HE* 3.24.11, in which he employs the unique word *παράδοξων* rather than the usual term, *σημείων*, which is universally attested in the MS tradition. Because, Hill argues, the Latin Vulgate translates *παράδοξος* as *mirabilium* in Lk. 5:26, so also the original Greek of the *Muratorian Fragment* must have used *παράδοξων* rather than *σημείων* – just as in the case of Eusebius’ citation of Jn. 2:11. Yet there is reason to refrain from attaching too much value to this connection. First, it should be noted that there is no indication that the *Fragment* is citing Jn. 2:11 at all. Rather it cites I Jn. 1:1-3 before making a general statement about John’s role as an “eyewitness” and writer of the “marvellous deeds of the Lord in order.” The theme of Jesus’ “marvellous deeds” runs throughout the Fourth Gospel (e.g. 2:23; 3:2; 4:54; 6:2, 14, 26, 30; 7:31; 9:16; 11:47; 12:18, 37; 20:30), and thus it is more likely that the *Fragment* is referring to this constant Johannine theme rather than Jn. 2:11 specifically. In a similar way, Origen uses *παράδοξοις* rather than *σημεῖα* in his polemic against Celsus, where he refers generally to the “marvellous deeds of Jesus” (7.54). Secondly, the Vulgate also uses *mirabilium* as the Latin translation for *θαυμάσια* in Mt. 21:15. Thus *mirabilium* does not strictly correlate with *παράδοξος*. Thirdly, Eusebius appears to be paraphrasing Jn. 2:11 in *HE* 3.24.11, not citing it verbatim. In any case, there is no reason to believe *παράδοξων* must have originated with Papias. Thus the appearance of *παράδοξων* rather than *σημείων* may not bear as much value in the end as Hill suggests.

³⁶⁰ Bauckham, “Papias and Polycrates,” 55.

³⁶¹ Hill (“What Papias Said,” 600-1) points to Irenaeus’ use of *παραδεδοκέναι* (Greek text in Eusebius 3.23.3 citing *AH*. 2.22.5) and Eusebius’ use of *παραδοῦναι* found in Eusebius, *HE* 3.24.11 to suggest that they used the same source and that both Irenaeus and Eusebius convey that John “‘handed down’

At this point there are two primary explanations for the questions surrounding Eusebius' testimony: either (i) Hill is correct and Papias is the source for what is found in *HE* 3.24.8-13, and everyone up to Eusebius simply ignored Papias' testimony, *and*, with the exception of Origen, they also ignored the apparent problem of the divergent portrayal of the events in John's Gospel; *or* (ii) the testimony in *HE* 3.24.8-13 did not originate from Papias and Eusebius has derived his information from elsewhere. If the second explanation is correct, there must be evidence that Eusebius has stopped quoting from his earlier source. There should also be some telltale signs that Eusebius is engaged with the testimony of Origen.

6.4 The Limits of Eusebius' Source

Because Eusebius is paraphrasing his source, it is not easy to determine exactly where his source material and his own comments begin and end. Yet, as Bauckham has noted, it is difficult to suppose with Hill that Papias is behind all of the content of *HE* 3.24.5-13. In particular, Bauckham suggests that the phrase in 3.24.8, "The record is indeed true" (καὶ ἀληθὴς γὰρ ὁ λόγος) marks the end of the passage drawn from the source, beginning in 3.24.5 with the phrase "tradition says" (κατέχει λόγος). He continues by arguing that the rest of *HE* 3.24.8 through *HE* 3.24.10 "is Eusebius' own explanatory comment."³⁶² Hill concedes that Eusebius does break from his source to issue his own comments, but he maintains that Eusebius is still using the information from his source.³⁶³ However, Bauckham notes, Eusebius may maintain some of the vocabulary, but his comments in *HE* 3.24.8b-10 "are not to be relied on for communicating what the source itself said."³⁶⁴

something that would prove that Jesus' ministry lasted well beyond his thirtieth year." Hill (*ibid.*, 600) states: "[A]ll Irenaeus may have needed from the independent witness of 'the elders' was simply an affirmation that Jesus' ministry actually began well before the 'one year' which seemingly formed the basis of the synoptic accounts...What may have been in the 'elders' witness' was simply a defence of the order of events in John based partly on the claim that John had recorded events from the early ministry of John which had been omitted by the other evangelists, thus confirming that the ministry of Jesus was in reality substantially longer than is recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke." Yet, in *AH* 2.22 Irenaeus makes no mention or allusion to the discrepancies of the Gospels. Rather, as noted in Chapter 4, he is combating the views of the Valentinians in *AH* 2.22 that the thirty years of Jesus' life corresponds to their thirty Æons. See also Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 431.

³⁶² Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 433.

³⁶³ Hill, "What Papias Said," 593-4, 599; *eadem*, "Orthodox Gospel," 288.

³⁶⁴ Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 433.

Indeed, Bauckham appears to be correct in that Eusebius' dependence upon his source ends in *HE* 3.24.8 (καὶ ἀληθῆς γὰρ ὁ λόγος), for after this one finds Eusebius' own solution to the issue of Gospel incongruities beginning to take shape. Thus, I suggest that there is an *inclusio* in which Eusebius is clearly drawing significantly from his source beginning with κατέχει λόγος in *HE* 3.24.5 and ending with καὶ ἀληθῆς γὰρ ὁ λόγος in *HE* 3.24.8a.

What follows (3.24.8-10) is Eusebius' argument that the Synoptics recorded the deeds of Jesus for one year after John the Baptist's imprisonment, for which he presents Synoptic proof-texts regarding John the Baptist's imprisonment. Eusebius prefaces his reference to Matthew by explicitly mentioning the forty-days fast and the temptation that followed it before citing Mt. 4:12. He then proceeds to cite Mk. 1:14 and Lk. 3:20.

Following this, in *HE* 3.24.11, Eusebius proceeds with "they say" (φασί), followed by the notice that John was exhorted (παρακληθέντα) on account of these things to hand down (παραδοῦναι) in his Gospel an account of the period that had been omitted by the other evangelists and the deeds done by the Savior during the time prior to the imprisonment of John the Baptist. Hill argues that Eusebius' use of φασί shows that he is referring back to the same written record,³⁶⁵ but there are a number of scholars who would disagree. Lawlor³⁶⁶ felt that the use of φασί here indicated an oral tradition, and Sellew³⁶⁷ suggested that Eusebius typically uses φασί when "he had no clear written authority." Indeed, Lawlor finds only one instance where φασί is equivalent to κατέχει λόγος (*HE* 7.12),³⁶⁸ but Hill has pointed to *HE* 2.15.1 as a counterexample of φασί referring to a written source (Clement of Alexandria and Papias).³⁶⁹ Bauckham suggests that the "likely explanation is that

³⁶⁵ Hill, "What Papias Said," 591. See also n. 25, where he counters the positions of Lawlor and Sellew.

³⁶⁶ Lawlor (*Evsebian*, 22, n. 2) states, "For when in §§7ff. he recounts a story of the origin of St. John's Gospel, for which no earlier authority is known, he refers, and apparently with some emphasis, to common report as the evidence for what he tells (φασί, §§7 bis, 11)."

³⁶⁷ P. Sellew, "Eusebius and the Gospels," in H. W. Attridge and G. Hata, eds., *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism* *Studia Post-Biblica* 42 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 117.

³⁶⁸ Lawlor, *Evsebian*, 36, n.2.

³⁶⁹ Hill, "What Papias Said," 591, n. 25; Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 435.

Eusebius' written source was itself reporting oral tradition," but this does not mean that it was necessarily Papias.³⁷⁰

I am not convinced that φασι does actually demonstrate that Eusebius is referencing the same λόγος source that he notes in *HE* 3.24.5, 8. Nevertheless, presuming for the moment that Hill is correct and φασι refers to Eusebius' written source, just how much information that follows is to be attributed to this source? It could very well be that all Eusebius' source had to say was that John handed down (παραδοῦναι) an account that included the events in Jesus' life that the Synoptic Gospels "passed over in silence" (παρὰσιωπηθέντα; *HE* 3.24.11). Certainly some of the vocabulary in *HE* 3.24.11 is not uncommon to what is attributed to Papias elsewhere, as Hill notes. For example, he points to the notice that John was exhorted (παρακλήθεντα; *HE* 3.24.11) to hand down his Gospel, which parallels what Clement and Papias say about Mark (παρακλήσεσιν; *HE* 2.15.1), Clement's statement that John was "urged" to write (προτραπέντα; *HE* 6.14.7) so also the *Muratorian Fragment* and Victorinus (*cohortantibus*).³⁷¹ But just as there are different accounts as to who it was that requested or urged John to write his Gospel,³⁷² it is entirely possible that Eusebius could have filled in additional information that was not contained in his source (nor in any other source prior to Eusebius that used Papias). If Eusebius' source only mentions that John handed down an account of events that the Synoptics passed over in silence (παρὰσιωπηθέντα) in addition to his being "urged", then Eusebius himself very well may have specified these events that the Synoptics passed over in *HE* 3.24.11 to that time which surrounds the incarceration of John the Baptist.

Indeed, Eusebius repeats this argument again in *HE* 3.24.12, 13 all under the guise that he is recording information from his source. But as Bauckham notes, "it is possible that the source itself said much less than Eusebius made it say."³⁷³ Bauckham goes on to say that Eusebius' retrieval of his source probably does not extend beyond *HE* 3.24.11, for in *HE* 3.24.12-13 one finds that he adds his own

³⁷⁰ Bauckham, *Jesus as Eyewitnesses*, 434f.

³⁷¹ Hill, "What Papias Said," 592, 596.

³⁷² Hill (ibid., 596) notes these identities as follows: Clement: τῶν γνωρίμων; *MF*: *condiscipulis, et episcopis*; Victorinus: *episcopi*.

³⁷³ Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 436.

comments.³⁷⁴ Other scholars, including Bauckham, express hard and soft reluctance in presuming that Eusebius' argument in *HE* 3.24.8-13 originated from Papias.³⁷⁵ Yet in both instances where Bauckham finds reason to believe that Eusebius has dropped his source (*HE* 3.24.8-10; 12-13), he offers no explanation as to why Eusebius chooses the direction that he takes his argument. If Eusebius is indeed inserting additional details into the tradition that lay before him, what are they and why would he have felt compelled to amend his source? The answer is found in what Origen had to say regarding the discrepancies of the Gospels in *Comm. Jo.* 10.2.

6.5 *HE* 3.24.8b-13 as a Corrective of Origen

Eusebius' argument found in *HE* 3.24.8-13 may very well be a thinly veiled response to Origen's challenge to those who want to claim historical legitimacy to all four Gospel accounts. It is remarkably simple, but thorough enough to provide an explanation of the differences Origen has mentioned.

In *HE* 3.24.11, Eusebius states that John records the period passed over in silence by the Synoptics, and then he specifies that period as being prior to John the Baptist's imprisonment. He mentions the wedding of Cana (Jn. 2:11) as one of these events, with which Origen was clearly concerned as well. Furthermore, in *HE* 3.24.12 he expands the scope of events that are unique to the Gospel of John when he states that, "John, in his Gospel, records the deeds of Christ that were performed before the Baptist was cast into prison, but the other three evangelists mention the events that happened after that time." By implication, this includes John's record of Jesus' first trip to Capernaum, which Origen found to be incompatible with the Synoptics. This means, of course, that John records a trip to Capernaum that is not relayed in the Synoptic accounts. This is certainly how Epiphanius later understood and applied Eusebius' testimony (*Haer.* 51.21.14-24), where, in his refutation of the *Alogi*, he states that John records multiple trips of Jesus to Capernaum.

In Eusebius' conclusion (*HE* 3.24.13), it is clear that he is responding to some criticism surrounding apparent discrepancies amongst the Gospels: "And if these

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 433.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 435. See also Hengel, *Four Gospels*, 45-6; cf. Campenhausen, *Formation*, 130-4.

things are understood, no longer do the Gospels appear to disagree with one another” (δόξαι διαφωνεῖν ἀλλήλοις τὰ εὐαγγέλια). But where does Eusebius get the notion that the Gospels are not coherent in regards to the period of time he has just described? The most obvious solution is Origen. Indeed, if one compares the language Eusebius employs with that found in Origen, there is even more reason to believe that he is providing a corrective to Origen’s views.

Origen repeatedly mentions the discrepancy (διαφωνίαν) of John’s account, and he issues a challenge to those who accept the four Gospels and suppose this apparent discrepancy (δοκοῦσαν διαφωνίαν) is not to be solved by means of anagogical interpretation (ἀναγωγῆς): they must clear up the difficulties he has raised. It is easy to see how Eusebius’ testimony does just this. Indeed, he casts his response in very similar language to that of Origen: ‘And if these things are understood (οἷς καὶ ἐπιστήσαντι), the Gospels no longer appear to disagree with one another (δόξαι διαφωνεῖν ἀλλήλοις τὰ εὐαγγέλια)’ (HE 3.24.13).

Furthermore, Origen’s criticism is clearly directed at the *historical* veracity of the four Gospels that contradict each other. We have noted his statement that there are “many other points” at which these Gospels do not agree (ἱστορίαν ἀσυμφωνίας; *Comm. Jo.* 10.2). Again in *Comm. Jo.* 10.3 he states that those who believe these Gospels are “history” (ἱστορίαν) will deem it impossible that these four writers are recording truth. Now, turning to Eusebius’ own defense of John, he clearly drops the vocabulary of his written source for that of Origen. In the early portions of his testimony, while reliant on the Papiian tradition, Eusebius refers to the Gospels as “recollections” (ὑπομνήματα; HE 3.24.5), and “proclamations” (κηρύγματι, κηρύγματος; HE 3.24.7) of the evangelists; but beginning in HE 3.24.8b he adopts the vocabulary of Origen. Here Eusebius refers to the Gospels as “historical accounts” (ἱστορίας, ἱστορίαν) both at the beginning and end of his argument (HE 3.24.8, 13).

If Eusebius is, in fact, responding to Origen, why does he not mention him? Eusebius was a staunch defender of Origen and likely refrained from referring to him because of his sympathies towards the man, which are seen throughout the sixth book of his *Ecclesiastical History*. Yet Eusebius also is clearly concerned that the four Gospels be seen as harmonious. This is apparent in his *Epistula ad Carpianum* to which he subjoined his *Canones*. In a battle for Eusebius’ allegiance, the authority and integrity of the Gospels has clearly prevailed over the views of Origen, which do not square with Eusebius’ own convictions. Indeed, Eusebius’ ten canons, in which

he draws parallels between the four Gospels, provide ample evidence to demonstrate that Eusebius himself is clearly concerned with the compatibility of the four Gospels and may very well have developed the argument found in *HE* 3.24.8-13 as a result of his own study. Eusebius' analysis, conjoined with Papias' tradition of the origins of the Gospels, would have made for a tidy account and explanation of the differences and overall compatibility of the Gospels. One may wonder if this is not precisely what we have here in *HE* 3.24.5-13.

6.6 Epiphanius' Use of Eusebius' Rebuttal to Origen

Turning to Epiphanius' refutation of the *Alogi* it is clear that he has used Eusebius' testimony for his own purposes. In particular, there are clear indications that Epiphanius' testimony in *Haer.* 51.21.14-24 is a pillaged form of Eusebius' account in *HE* 3.24.11-13.³⁷⁶

In this portion of Epiphanius (*Haer.* 51.21.14-24) there are clear echoes of the argument from Eusebius. As with Eusebius, Epiphanius' response hinges on distinguishing those events that happened before the imprisonment of John the Baptist and those that happened afterwards. He argues, "For John the Evangelist signals that before the arrest of John the Baptist, the Lord went to him <again> after the days of the temptation. For if John was imprisoned, how did the Savior return to him again at the Jordan?" (*Haer.* 51.21.17).³⁷⁷ Epiphanius proceeds to commandeer the second-half of Eusebius' argument: "But they did not know that the other three evangelists set out in accurate detail the time after the imprisonment of John the Baptist" (*Haer.* 51.21.18a).

He then chronicles a few of the events recorded in the Gospel of John during this period before the Baptist's imprisonment.³⁷⁸ He speaks of Jesus' first trip to Capernaum (Jn. 2:12; *Haer.* 51.21.19-21),³⁷⁹ Jesus' cleansing of the Temple (Jn. 2:13-22; *Haer.* 51.21.22-23), and His encounter with Nicodemus (Jn. 3:1-15; *Haer.*

³⁷⁶ Smith ("Gaius," 403-4) notes this as a distinct possibility, but wrongly suggests that Eusebius' argument for the harmony of the Gospel of John with the Synoptics is aimed at Gaius, not Origen.

³⁷⁷ Here we see Epiphanius carrying forward his argument from earlier in his defence that Jesus and John the Baptist had two separate meetings (cf. *Haer.* 51.13.9-10; cf. *Haer.* 51.4.5-10).

³⁷⁸ All of these are explicitly mentioned by Origen (*Comm. Jo.* 10.2).

³⁷⁹ The second trip to Capernaum (cf. John 6:16ff) is noted in *Haer.* 51.21.32, which, Epiphanius emphasizes, is "in agreement with the other Gospels".

51.21.23). To this short list Epiphanius adds the same proof found in Eusebius taken from John 3:22-24, “Jesus came, along with His disciples, to Judea, and spent time there with them and baptized. And John was also <baptizing> in Aenon near Salim, because much water was there, *for John was not yet cast into prison* (*Haer.* 51.21.24, cf. *HE* 3.24.11; Jn. 3:22-24).

Epiphanius’ argument is pilfered straight from Eusebius. As with Eusebius, Epiphanius emphasizes the fact that John records the deeds of Christ *prior to* the John the Baptist’s imprisonment. Other than Eusebius, no other writer prior to Epiphanius makes this particular argument to harmonize the chronology of John with that of the Synoptics. There are other places in Epiphanius’ account of the *Alogi* where the fingerprints of Eusebius are discernible as well.³⁸⁰

6.7 Eusebius as the Source for the Criticism of Porphyry, Celsus and Philosabbatius

As noted in Chapter 3, Epiphanius includes a criticism that he attributes to Porphyry, Celsus and Philosabbatius (*Haer.* 51.8.1-4). This criticism rests on the apparent incompatibility of the events surrounding the birth narrative of Jesus as portrayed by Matthew and Luke. Luke’s sequence runs: birth, circumcision eight days later, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem forty days later, and a record of the actions of Simeon and Anna. Matthew, on the other hand, says that an angel appeared to “him” (Joseph) and told him to go to Egypt, after the arrival of the Magi (Mt. 2:13). The conclusion of these critics, according to Epiphanius, is that Luke must therefore be lying when he says that Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to Jerusalem and returned to Nazareth after forty days (Lk. 2:22, 39). Here again is the criticism:

And so some other Greek philosophers, I mean Porphyry and Celsus and Philosabbatius, who is a dreadful, deceitful snake from the Jews, accuse the facts of the Gospels through the overthrow of the holy apostles; being natural and fleshly, leading their war according to the flesh and, being powerless, they cannot please God; and they have not understood that which is <said> by the Spirit.

For each <of them>, striking against the words of the truth because of the blindness of their ignorance, in their attacks on this say: ‘How is it possible that the day of his birth in Bethlehem has a circumcision eight days later, and forty days after a journey to Jerusalem and the things Simon and Anna did for him, when on the night he was born it says an angel appeared to him, after the magi had come to worship him and opened the bags and offered him gifts? As it says, “An angel appeared to him saying, ‘Get up, take

³⁸⁰ Hill has noted briefly the possible association between *HE* 3.24.5-17 and Epiphanius’ testimony, but only in passing. Hill (*Johannine Corpus*, 186, n. 53) lists the following: 51.4.10; 6.5; 12.2; 21.1; 21.18, 24. See also idem, “What Papias Said,” 607.

your wife and the child, and go to Egypt, because Herod is looking for the life of the child.” (Mt. 2:13) If he was taken to Egypt on the night he was born, and was there until Herod died, how is it possible that he remained [in Bethlehem] for eight days and be circumcised? Or how is it possible after forty days,³⁸¹ as it is found in Luke, who is lying? They say this blasphemously against each of their own heads, because he says, ‘On the fortieth day they brought him to Jerusalem and <returned> into Nazareth.’ (cf. Lk. 2:22, 39; *Haer.* 51.8.1-4).³⁸²

The search for Epiphanius’ source of this criticism has produced varying results, all of which are inconclusive. Naturally, some have suggested it has come from a lost work of one of these critics, while Smith presumes Epiphanius derived this criticism from all three.³⁸³ As Philosabbatius is an otherwise unknown character, it is Celsus and Porphyry who receive due attention. Harnack includes Epiphanius’ notice in his catalogue of Porphyrian fragments (Fr. 12).³⁸⁴ Likewise, J. G. Cook points towards Porphyry as Epiphanius’ most probable source.³⁸⁵ Celsus is perhaps an unlikely candidate, as Origen, in his *Contra Celsum*, only mentions the vague criticism of Celsus regarding the adoration of the Magi and the flight into Egypt (*Cels.* 1.58).³⁸⁶

In the search for Epiphanius’ source, allusions are plentiful, however precise correlations have been difficult to establish. But perhaps there is an answer to the question of Epiphanius’ source for this criticism that has gone unnoticed. Turning to Eusebius’ work, *Gospel Questions and Answers*, one finds the identical conflict posed between the Matthean and Lukan accounts.³⁸⁷ In this portion of his work, Eusebius is responding to questions that supposedly originated from a certain Stephanos. The final question that Eusebius records asks rhetorically, “How is it that Matthew reports that Jesus was brought by His parents from Bethlehem to Egypt, but Luke states that they went to Jerusalem and then to Nazareth?” (*Gospel Questions ad. Stephanos* 16). The similarities between Eusebius and Epiphanius are clear. The

³⁸¹ Clearly implying Luke’s account of Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem.

³⁸² *GSC* 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 258.

³⁸³ Smith, “Gaius,” 382.

³⁸⁴ Adolf von Harnack, “Porphyrius, *Gegen die Christen*, 15 Bücher: Zeugnisse, Fragmente und Referate,” *Abhandlungen der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 1916 (Philo.-Hist. Kl., Nr. 1).

³⁸⁵ Cook, 137.

³⁸⁶ As noted by Claudio Zamagni (ed.), *Eusèbe de Césarée, Questions Évangéliques, Introduction, Texte Critique, Traduction et Notes*. SC 523 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2008), 184-5, n. 1.

³⁸⁷ Zamagni (184-5) hints at the parallels with Epiphanius, but he sides with Cook (137) in presuming a Porphyrian source.

same verses are pitted against one another (Mt. 2:13 vs. Lk. 2:22, 39) and the same dilemma is posed: both accounts appear incompatible. And while one could argue that both Eusebius and Epiphanius were reliant on a shared source, the fact that Epiphanius also repeats the very same response as Eusebius suggests that Epiphanius may have spliced this portion of Eusebius' testimony into his account of the *Alogi*.

Eusebius' response to this question is to shift the presumed period of time of which Matthew speaks to a period two years after Jesus' birth. Matthew is recording elements left out of Luke's narrative, and the same is true vice versa. If we juxtapose these two accounts, the links between Epiphanius and Eusebius are undeniable:

EUSEBIUS

(Praef. 16) Problem:

Matthew says Jesus and His parents went from Bethlehem to Egypt; Luke states that they went to Jerusalem, then Nazareth.

(16.2) Answer:

Matthew does not report what Luke does, but records other things (*viz.* the Magi).

(16.3) Two years passed between Jesus' birth and Matthew's account of the Magi, as seen in Herod's edict to kill all newborns two years and under (Mt. 2:16).

(16.4) Mary and Joseph went back to Bethlehem a second time because of the memory (μνήμης) of the miracle of Jesus' birth.

(16.4) The time of the Savior's birth in Luke is not the same as that in Matthew, when the Magi are encountered.

(16.5) The Magi did not find Jesus in the manger, but *inside the house* with His mother. Thus, it was a later time.

EPIPHANIUS

(51.8.4) Problem:

Matthew says, Jesus was taken to Egypt; how can he stay (in Bethlehem)? Luke lies: saying Jesus went to Jerusalem, then Nazareth.

(51.9.1-2) Answer:

Matthew does not cover the same period of time that Luke does – no mention of circumcision or Jesus' first two years

(51.9.5) Herod ordered the killing of all children two years and younger, thus Jesus was two years old when the Magi came.

(51.9.10) Christ's parents went back to Bethlehem – coming as a sort of memorial (μνήμης) of the events in Bethlehem.

(51.9.3) Luke describes the events before Jesus was two years old; Matthew speaks of His birth, then speaks of events two years later.

(51.9.12) The Magi entered *the house* and saw the baby with Mary, no longer in a manger or a cave, but in a house.

Now, questions naturally arise regarding the fact that Eusebius' work claims to be in response to questions posed by a certain Stephanos, but Epiphanius attributes the source of this criticism as originating from Celsus, Porphyry and Philosabbatius. Nevertheless, the style of criticism found throughout Eusebius' account is closely related to the attempts by people such as Celsus and Porphyry to find contradictions between Christian texts.³⁸⁸ Indeed, as Zamagni notes, the particular method of instruction that Eusebius employs is characteristic of various schools of philosophy during this time, and is noted in, for example, Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* (*Vita Plot.* 13).³⁸⁹ The influence of certain aspects Hellenistic philosophical thought on Eusebius is also noted by Wallace-Hadrill.³⁹⁰

There is also a distinct possibility that Eusebius was directly influenced by the style of Origen, who bridged philosophy and Christianity in a way that pleased Eusebius (cf. *HE* 6.19). Indeed, a fragment in the catena of Origen's *Commentary on Matthew* provides essentially the same explanation of a two-year disparity between Jesus' birth and the arrival of the Magi. It should be noted, however, that the fragment is attributed to *both* Eusebius and Origen, so its true origins are unknown.³⁹¹ Eusebius very well may have appropriated what he read in Origen's work, but it is far less plausible to assume that Epiphanius did the same, given his distaste for Origen.

Whatever its ultimate source, it is undeniable that such a question that emphasizes an apparent discrepancy between Gospel texts in a way that insinuates their unreliability aligns very closely with the style of attack issued by Celsus and Porphyry. It also resonates with a certain Origenist tone. By pitting two Gospel texts against one another to suggest disharmony, it also fits squarely with the nature of criticisms Epiphanius is collecting in his account of the *Alogi*, regardless of the fact that it has nothing to do with the Gospel of John at all. Thus, Epiphanius may

³⁸⁸ "The method of looking for contradictions in Biblical narrative is very consistent with Porphyry's scholarly technique. One cannot claim that Epiphanius preserves an explicit Porphyrian quotation." Cook, 137.

³⁸⁹ Cf. Zamagni, 33ff. He notes (33), "En effet, les problèmes qu'Eusèbe soulève sont Presque toujours liés à des contradictions entre différents passages des Évangiles, et non à l'exégèse d'un seul texte, comme il arrive che Philon."

³⁹⁰ D.S. Wallace-Hadrill, *Eusebius of Caesarea* (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1960), 148ff.

³⁹¹ See Zamagni, 184-5, n.1; Frag. 23 in E. Klostermann (ed.), *Origenes Werke. GCS 12,3 Band, III*, 1 (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs Verlag, 1941), 25.

very well have used Eusebius' testimony and simply presumed the origin of this argument from this trio of philosophers based on his knowledge of their attempts at discrediting Christianity by attacking the reliability of its honored texts.

6.8 Other Connections Between Eusebius and Epiphanius

If the lens through which one examines Eusebius' influence on Epiphanius' defence is expanded, there are additional traces of Eusebius' account throughout the witness of the so-called *Alogi*. Eusebius records that the tradition to which he refers says (κατέχει λόγος) that John and Matthew were compelled to write their written memorials "out of necessity" (ἐπ'ἀνάγκης; *HE* 3.24.5, cf. 3.24.11). Epiphanius maintains a similar vocabulary in his record that the Holy Spirit compelled (ἀναγκάζει) John to write his Gospel (*Haer.* 51.12.2).³⁹² Hill has rightly noted the fact that John was "compelled" to write his Gospel is broadly attested in other accounts of the origins of the Gospels, but the identity of the party requesting the Gospel to be written is a rather loose variable, perhaps indicating that the tradition – presumably from Papias – stopped short of providing the identity of the requesters. It is certainly not found in Eusebius, where John is described as being compelled to write his Gospel only in the passive voice (παρακληθέντα, *HE* 3.24.11). Epiphanius supplants the identity as being the Spirit that compelled John and Matthew (as well as Mark and Luke) to write their Gospels, but other writers supplied their own identities of those who asked John for a written account.³⁹³ The insertion of the various names of those who pressed John to write his Gospel is probably due to the fact that Papias never mentioned them; nevertheless the core tradition shared broadly among the witnesses that John was "compelled" to write his Gospel points back to the tradition of Papias.³⁹⁴

Furthermore, as Hill points out, Epiphanius' notice in *Haer.* 51.6.5 (that John did not wish to repeat what had already been said) has a very Eusebian flavor.³⁹⁵ This

³⁹² Epiphanius makes the same claim later on, arguing that the Holy Spirit compelled (ἀναγκάζει) Luke to write his Gospel (*Haer.* 51.7.1).

³⁹³ E.g. the *Muratorian Fragment* (line 10) claims it was John's fellow disciples (*condiscipulis*) and bishops (*episcopis suis*). Clement of Alexandria states it was John's acquaintances (γνωρίμων; *HE* 6.14.7).

³⁹⁴ Cf. Bauckham, "Papias," 62; Hill, "What Papias Said," 596-7.

³⁹⁵ Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 186, n. 53.

goes hand in hand with another example found in Epiphanius' description of the purpose behind the writing of the Fourth Gospel. Epiphanius states that John did not need to speak about the things that had already been confirmed, such as his advent (*Haer.* 51.12.3; cf. 51.6.2, 5). He repeats this notice in *Haer.* 51.19.2-5 and adds that John omitted (ἀπεσιώπησεν) nothing essential, but that through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he spoke of the Divine Word (θεὸν Λόγον). Eusebius says much the same thing: John naturally omitted (ἀποσιωπήσαι) the genealogy because Matthew and Luke had already spoken of this; rather he spoke of the doctrine of his Divinity (θεολογίας) reserved for him by the Divine Spirit (*HE* 3.24.13).

One could also argue that Eusebius' notices on the Gospels of Luke and Mark also find a home in the testimony of Epiphanius. In his address to Theophilus, Luke claims to have written his "orderly account" since many others have compiled narratives of the ministry of Jesus (Lk. 1:1-4). To this, Eusebius supplements the additional details that Luke thought it "necessary to deliver us from other contested ideas" (*HE* 3.24.15). Epiphanius makes a very similar point, although he specifies that the Holy Spirit compelled Luke to raise up their (*viz.* Cerinthus et. al.; cf. *Haer.* 51.7.3, 51.20.4-5) misguided understanding from the lowest depths (*Haer.* 51.7.1-3). With regard to Mark, Eusebius is the first to mention in his account of the Gospels that Mark was sent to Egypt after writing his Gospel (*HE* 2.16.1). Likewise, Epiphanius preserves this information in his own account (*Haer.* 51.6.10).³⁹⁶

6.9 Summary

Epiphanius was not the only one to disagree with Origen's position that the Gospel of John could not be considered an accurate record of history. Using the testimony of Papias as his platform, Eusebius provides a response to Origen's demand for an explanation of how the apparent discrepancies between John and the Synoptics are to be reconciled. Epiphanius clearly used Eusebius' justification in his own rebuttal against the criticisms of the so-called *Alogi*. He also borrowed the criticism and response found in Eusebius' *Gospel Questions and Answers*, which he then attributed to known Gospel critics. These examples in addition to other Eusebian features throughout the account of the *Alogi* solidify the fact that the

³⁹⁶ Jerome would later preserve this notice as well (*De vir. ill.* 8).

“Father of Church History” played an important role in Epiphanius’ construction of this composite heresy.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Possible Sources for the Objections to the Apocalypse by the Alogi

From which source(s) did Epiphanius derive the criticisms against the Apocalypse? Whereas it is possible to determine the source for the *Alogi*'s criticisms against the Gospel of John, there is no extant literature prior to Epiphanius that records any matching objections to those concerning John's Apocalypse. As such, the answer to the question is inherently open-ended, but not without possible explanations. Some hypotheses, however, are more plausible than others. In this chapter, I shall proceed by providing the criticisms of the so-called *Alogi* against the Apocalypse before addressing the deficiencies in the consensus view. Despite the fact that many scholars suggest that Gaius of Rome was the ultimate source behind the criticisms of the Apocalypse, the evidence does not lead to this conclusion. In contrast, I will demonstrate that the earliest extant sources that raise serious hermeneutical objections to the Apocalypse are Origen and Dionysius of Alexandria, and that Epiphanius likely used these writers as the sources for the criticisms of the Apocalypse by the so-called *Alogi*.

7.1 The Objections to the Apocalypse of John

Objection 1

And again these people are not ashamed to take up arms against the things said by Saint John, believing that they are able to overturn the truth, but being unaware that they are attacking themselves rather than sound teachings. For they say mockingly of the Apocalypse, 'What use is it to me, he says (τί με, φησίν), when the Apocalypse of John tells me about seven angels and seven trumpets?' – not knowing that such things were essential and profitable to the correctness of the proclamation" (*Haer.* 51.32.1-3; cf. Rev. 8:2).³⁹⁷

Objection 2

Again some of them attack the following text in the Apocalypse and say in contradiction that 'He said, in a contradiction, 'Write to the angel of the church that is in Thyatira,' and there is no church of Christians in Thyatira. How then did he write to a church that does not exist?' In fact these people destroy themselves since they are compelled by their own declarations to confess the truth. For if they say, 'There is now no church in Thyatira,' they show that this was foretold by John.

³⁹⁷ GCS 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 305.

For since those who are of the Phrygians settled there [and] grabbed the minds of the simple believers like wolves, and converted the whole area to their heresy, those that reject the Apocalypse attacked this text at that time in an effort to discredit it (*Haer.* 51.33.1-3; Rev. 2:18).³⁹⁸

Objection 3

But again these people get excited in their boundless hunt for texts to give the notion of throwing out the books of the holy apostle – I mean the Gospel and Apocalypse of John (and perhaps the Epistles also, for these are also in accord with the Gospel and Apocalypse) – and they say (φασιν) that, ‘I saw, and he said to the angel, “Loose the four angels that are upon the Euphrates.” And I heard the number of the host, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, and they had been fortified in breastplates of fire and sulfur and hyacinth.’ (Rev. 9:14-17) For these people considered that the truth might somehow be <a kind of> joke (*Haer.* 51.34.1-3a).³⁹⁹

7.2 Hippolytus’ Refutation of Gaius as Epiphanius’ Source?

The consensus view established by Schwartz, Smith and others states that Epiphanius derived these criticisms from a lost work of Hippolytus against Gaius of Rome. This is not impossible, but it is unlikely. As I have argued in Chapter 2, the evidence does not support the view that Epiphanius is reliant upon Hippolytus alone for his account of the *Alogi*. This has been confirmed throughout the preceding chapters where I have demonstrated that Epiphanius is reliant upon a variety of sources for his information concerning his testimony regarding the attacks on the Gospel of John. The question now is whether the same also applies to the criticisms of the Apocalypse?

There are two pieces of evidence that have often been read in favor of the notion that Gaius *did* reject the Apocalypse and attribute it to Cerinthus, to which Hippolytus responded in his lost work(s). The first comes from a portion of Gaius’ *Dialogue with Proclus*, preserved by Eusebius (*HE* 3.28.1-2), where Gaius states that Cerinthus wrote an apocalyptic work under the guise of an unspecified “great apostle”. Eusebius quotes Gaius this way:

Gaius, whose words are quoted earlier, in his disputation, investigates these things concerning this man [Cerinthus]. He writes, ‘But also Cerinthus, who through revelations (ἀποκαλύψεων) as if having been written by a great apostle (ἀποστόλου μεγάλου), introduces marvellous stories to us that he falsely claims have been given to him by angels, saying after the resurrection there will come an earthly kingdom of Christ, and that flesh dwelling in Jerusalem will again be enslaved to desires and

³⁹⁸ *GCS* 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 306-7.

³⁹⁹ *GCS* 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 308-9.

pleasures. And being hostile to the scriptures of God, desiring to lead [others] astray, he says there will be a thousand years for marriage festivities.’ (*HE* 3.28.1b-3).⁴⁰⁰

Immediately following this citation of Gaius, Eusebius records this statement by Dionysius of Alexandria:

But Cerinthus...desiring trustworthy authority for his own forgery (πλάσματι), assigned the name. For this was the doctrine of his teachings: the kingdom of Christ will be on earth. And he dreamed that this would consist of those things he desired, since he was a lover of the body and altogether fleshly: satisfaction of his belly and those parts below – that is, in food and drinks and wedding feasts and through those provisions (by which he supposed to make himself more presentable) in festivals and sacrifices of holy victims. (*HE* 3.28.4-5).⁴⁰¹

Many scholars suggest that Eusebius intentionally juxtaposes these two quotations in order to reflect his own opinion that Gaius must be referring to the Johannine Apocalypse. It is clear from Eusebius’ lengthier citation of this portion of Dionysius’ work in *HE* 7.25.1-2, noted below, that Dionysius is referring to the John’s Apocalypse, but that does not necessarily mean Gaius of Rome does the same.

The second batch of evidence that links Epiphanius’ record of the *Alogi*’s criticisms of the Apocalypse with an earlier work of Hippolytus comes from bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu. The latter records that Hippolytus wrote a refutation of Gaius and an apologetic work in defense of the Gospel and Apocalypse of John; the former alludes to a similar Hippolytan work against Gaius, citing five criticisms of Gaius against the Apocalypse, one of which is very similar to one of the objections of the *Alogi*. These later writers are the first to attribute these concerns to Hippolytus.⁴⁰²

If priority is given to the later evidence, then it is all but certain that Epiphanius’ source must have been a lost Hippolytan work upon which Epiphanius and bar Salibi are both reliant. However, the early evidence, examined below, tells a different story. When one carefully studies Gaius’ statements, it is evident that he never rejected the Johannine Apocalypse as a Cerinthian forgery. Moreover, the similar statements of Dionysius of Alexandria ought to be considered in light of their own historical context, which makes no allusions to Gaius or the Montanist controversy.

⁴⁰⁰ *GCS* 9,1, 256-8.

⁴⁰¹ *GCS* 9,1, 258. Cf. the translation of Klijn and Reinink, 103-5.

⁴⁰² See Bardy, 353; Klijn and Reinink, 4.

Regarding the later evidence, I shall demonstrate in Chapter 9 that the testimonies of Dionysius bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu are not as reliable as many have suggested in defining the early ecclesiastical sentiments towards the Johannine writings. Rather, the evidence actually suggests that bar Salibi was reliant upon a florilegium and that he assumed such criticisms came from Gaius based on his reading of *HE* 3.28.1-2. As such, his statements do not reflect an original, lost work of Hippolytus.⁴⁰³ Likewise, Ebed-Jesu's record of Hippolytus' works reflects his own contemporary understanding, not privileged information that went unnoticed for over a millennium. Thus, in order to truly discern where Epiphanius derived his information, it is necessary to prioritize and carefully examine the earliest sources.

7.3 The Statements of Gaius

Many scholars follow the views of Schwartz and Smith that Gaius' statements in *HE* 3.28.1-2 prove that he rejected John's Apocalypse and attributed it to Cerinthus; however, Gaius does not explicitly claim either of these things. In light of the bar Salibi commentaries, it is natural to presume he meant John's Apocalypse; on its own merit, however, Gaius' testimony does not indicate this.⁴⁰⁴ As I shall indicate below, there was broad and positive attestation to John's Apocalypse at this time. Thus it is safe to presume Gaius was at least aware of this work, and if he had knowledge of Cerinthus claiming John's Apocalypse as his own, one could expect Gaius to have stated as much. Also, given Eusebius' suspicions about John's Apocalypse, which emerge clearly in this third book of his *Ecclesiastical History*,⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰³ Campenhausen (*Formation*, 239-40) explains the issue well; however, based on a close examination of the bar Salibi evidence (Ch. 9), I cannot agree with his conclusion: "Unfortunately, the problem of sources for the whole complex web of opposition to John is an extremely difficult one, since the crucial texts, namely the writings of Hippolytus – or, more probably, his work specifically against Gaius – have been lost, and have laboriously to be reconstructed from later reports and quotations. But the main lines of his defence, and by the same token those of Gaius's attack, can nevertheless still be established."

⁴⁰⁴ This is a point that Smith attempts to overturn by introducing "tentative" grammatical and syntactical emendations to Eusebius' text that produce his desired reading, which is that Cerinthus supported his own doctrine from the text of John's Apocalypse. Smith ("Gaius," 332) states that his emendations to the Greek "are the preferred ones when examined in terms of the existing fragments themselves rather than under the umbrella of the summary statements of the later polemicists." His overall analysis, however, is not as impartial as he suggests, and his proposed emendations are unnecessary and unsupported by the manuscript tradition.

⁴⁰⁵ Cf. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 131, who notes that Eusebius' earlier views (*viz.* in his *Chronicon*, treat the author of the Apocalypse as John the Apostle, teacher of Papias, Polycarp and Ignatius. See Helm (ed.), *GCS: Eusebius VII: Chronik Des Hieronymus* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1984), 192-4 (275-6F).

it is likely he would have enunciated this point further if Gaius had, in fact, attributed it to Cerinthus. After all, just a few paragraphs before quoting Gaius, Eusebius twists Irenaeus' statements about the "so-called Apocalypse of John" (ἐν τῇ Ἰωάννου λεγομένῃ Ἀποκαλύψει; *HE* 3.18.2). Nowhere does Irenaeus provide such a putative label. Furthermore, in *HE* 3.24.18 Eusebius emphasizes his view that the Apocalypse stands on shaky ground. Although he records Dionysius of Alexandria's negative views towards the Apocalypse (cf. *HE* 7.25), nowhere does Eusebius explicitly speak of Gaius' antagonism towards *John's* Apocalypse. This is odd, particularly if Grant is right in arguing, "At this point in Book III [Eusebius] was using every available weapon to discredit the book."⁴⁰⁶

First, Gaius does not specify the "great apostle" (ἀποστόλου μεγάλου).⁴⁰⁷ It is feasible that this could be John, but given the extant textual evidence, it is unknown which "great apostle" Cerinthus meant, and it must be recognized that in no way does it necessitate John the Apostle. For example, one finds a different explanation emerging from the writings of Apollonius, who mentions that the Montanist Themiso wrote "a certain catholic epistle" in imitation of "the apostle" (*HE* 5.18.5). Speculation on the intended identity of this nameless apostle is rampant, ranging from I John to II Peter and Jude. Campenhausen, following Zahn, is convinced that the term "the apostle", when absent from any specific context, must denote the apostle Paul.⁴⁰⁸ If this is correct, and if Apollonius' statements are analogous, perhaps Gaius addressed the same issue in his discussion of pseudo-Pauline works (cf. *HE* 6.20.3).

Second, Cerinthus' claim to a sensual chiliasm in which Jerusalem would play host to the longings and desires of the flesh can hardly be derived from John's Apocalypse.⁴⁰⁹ As Brent notes, Cerinthus' "marriage festivities" (ἐν γάμῳ ἑορτῆς) have little in common with the "marriage feast of the lamb" (τὸ δεῖπνον τοῦ γάμου τοῦ ἀρνίου; Rev. 19:9) either philologically or in the idea expressed.⁴¹⁰ Cerinthus'

⁴⁰⁶ Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 134.

⁴⁰⁷ The Paris MS (Bibliothèque Nationale 5500) of Rufinus records "*quasi apostolo*" here.

⁴⁰⁸ Campenhausen, *Formation*, 228, n. 103.

⁴⁰⁹ Contra A.F.J. Klijn and G.J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects. NovTSup*, 36 (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 5, who argue that Gaius' references to the work he mentions "make it almost certain that he is referring to the canonical *Apocalypse*." Cf. Bardy, 356, n. 3.

⁴¹⁰ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 134. Interestingly, Smith ("Gaius," 181-2) concurs.

views are equally incompatible with another known Apocalyptic work in the early Church, the *Apocalypse of Peter*. In this work there is no view of a licentious millennium in a distorted Jerusalem as Cerinthus claimed, nor does it make any mention of the marriage festivities. Other pseudepigraphical apocalypses such as those of Paul and Andrew do not support Cerinthus' eschatological frivolities.⁴¹¹

Third, some have argued that the reference to an angel granting Cerinthus his eschatological visions is an allusion to Rev. 1:1, where Jesus imparts the revelation to John through an angel. However, just because an angel revealed these things to Cerinthus does not necessarily point to John's Apocalypse, particularly since an angelic mediator is a standard feature in the apocalyptic genre.⁴¹² Furthermore, from the time of Hippolytus onward, it is recorded that Cerinthus also claimed that the Law and Prophets were given through the angels and through them the world was created (*Ref.* 10.21; *Adv. omn. haer.* 3; *Haer.* 28.1.2-3).

Finally, it may reasonably be deduced from Gaius' statement that he means Cerinthus composed *his own* "revelations" under the guise of a pseudo-apostolic confection.⁴¹³ It is important to note that Theodoret certainly maintained the view that Cerinthus wrote his own *Apocalypse*, and this is how he interprets the statements of Gaius and Dionysius: "Cerinthus also invented certain revelations pretending to have seen them himself. Against him not only have the above-named persons written, but with them also Gaius and Dionysius the Bishop of Alexandria" (*Haer. fab. comp.* 2.3).⁴¹⁴ Moreover, O. Skarsaune has argued that Cerinthus' millennial views, as described by Dionysius of Alexandria, may have been refuted as early as Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 118.2).⁴¹⁵

⁴¹¹ For a summary of various explanations other than assuming Gaius is speaking of the Johannine Apocalypse, see Bludau, 43ff.

⁴¹² Contra Smith ("Gaius," 182-3; cf. Bludau, 44), who argues, "The expressions 'a great apostle' and 'revelations shown to him by an angel' create the impression generally accepted, that Gaius is referring to John the Apostle and the revelation which was mediated to him by an angel." In contrast, a mediating angel is seen in the earliest apocalypses (e.g. Dan. 10:8-19; 1 Enoch 60:3-4) and up through those apocalyptic works that are generally contemporaneous with John's Revelation (e.g. 4 Ezra 10:29-31, 2 Enoch 2:7-8, Apoc. Abraham 11:1-6). On this issue I am indebted to the research and guidance of my friend and colleague, John Markley. See also, John J. Collins, "Introduction: Towards a Morphology of Genre," in *Semeia* 14 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), 1-21, esp. 9.

⁴¹³ See Bardy, 356.

⁴¹⁴ Translation in Lightfoot, *AF* i, II, 387. See also Brent, *Hippolytus*, 135-6.

⁴¹⁵ O. Skarsaune, *The Proof From Prophecy, A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile*. *NovTSup* 34, n. 2 Vol. LVI (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 406.

Prior to bar Salibi, there is no explicit evidence to indicate Gaius means Cerinthus claimed authorship of the Johannine Apocalypse;⁴¹⁶ rather, his testimony as well as that of Theodoret (and possibly Justin) suggest that Cerinthus concocted his own apocalyptic work, or perhaps drastically altered that of John (or maybe Peter), to fit his own views.⁴¹⁷ Interestingly, before the emergence of the bar Salibi commentaries this was the general opinion of Routh, Westcott and Lightfoot.⁴¹⁸

Gaius, it should be remembered, was a “learned” man (*HE* 6.20.3), and it is difficult to reconcile his intelligence with the odd view that Cerinthus was responsible for John’s Apocalypse.⁴¹⁹ Furthermore, if Gaius did not reject John’s Apocalypse, Hippolytus would not have had any reason to write a polemic against his views. As such, Epiphanius’ statements do not necessarily reflect a lost work of Hippolytus. It is true, however, that Dionysius of Alexandria makes a similar statement to that of Gaius, thus prompting many to suggest that Dionysius must be referring to Gaius of Rome in his statement that “some before us” held these views.⁴²⁰

7.4 The Statements of Dionysius of Alexandria and Their Historical Context

It is not impossible that Dionysius’ testimony could reflect Gaius’ statements, but if this is the case it must be recognized that Dionysius has gone well beyond what Gaius says. There are clear limits to what Gaius actually reports in *HE* 3.28.1-2. For example, he does not indicate which apostle Cerinthus was impersonating or that anyone rejected the Johannine Apocalypse; nor does he provide the specifics of Cerinthus’ millennial hopes of pleasure. Dionysius, on the other hand, crosses these boundaries, and various others.⁴²¹ As Hill notes, “[I]t would seem that Eusebius has

⁴¹⁶ See Smith, “Gaius”, 333, where he agrees that Gaius did not attribute John’s Apocalypse to Cerinthus, but that Hippolytus introduced this errant notion as part of his polemic against Gaius.

⁴¹⁷ Cf. Bardy, 356, who thinks Cerinthus did not write his own work, but commented on John’s.

⁴¹⁸ Routh, 14ff.; B.F. Westcott, *A General Survey of the Canon of the New Testament*, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1875), 245, n.1; Lightfoot, “Caius or Hippolytus?” 110.

⁴¹⁹ Lightfoot, *AF* i, 2, 386-7. See also Brent, *Hippolytus*, 135-7; Bludau, 120-9.

⁴²⁰ Lightfoot, *AF*, i, II, 386; Bludau, 50; Bardy, 361; Campenhausen, *Formation*, 237; Klijn and Reinink, 8; Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 134; Smith, “Gaius”, 190. Cf. Weinrich (ed.), xviii; Hill, “Cerinthus, Gnostic or Chiliast?” 164-5.

⁴²¹ See here esp. Skarsaune, 408. Skarsaune notes that Dionysius reports Cerinthus’ vision of a “*re-establishment of the sacrificial cult*,” which “cannot be derived from Gaius.” See also Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 175.

gone to the trouble of quoting Dionysius in *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.28.1-5, and not Gaius alone, partly for the very reason that Dionysius supplies this bit of information about Cerinthus which was not available to Gaius.”⁴²² If Dionysius were referring to Gaius’ statements, perhaps it is a case of careless reading, or maybe he felt at liberty to re-appropriate Gaius’ notice and make it more inflammatory for the situation he is addressing, which was very different than that with which Gaius was concerned, for Dionysius’ notice has nothing to do with Montanism or Rome.⁴²³

Eusebius notes specifically that Dionysius wrote his work *On the Promises* as a response to the millenarian views of a certain Nepos, whose eschatological expectations approximated those of Cerinthus. Eusebius notes, “Nepos, a bishop in Egypt, taught that the promises to the saints in the Holy Scriptures are to be rendered in a more Jewish manner, teaching that there will be a thousand years of bodily luxuries upon this earth” (*HE* 7.24.1-2).⁴²⁴ To support this notion, Nepos believed he could establish his opinions from the text of John’s Apocalypse. These he wrote in a book entitled *Refutations of the Allegorists* – a clear swipe at the spiritualizing exegesis of Origen and those who followed his hermeneutical approach, such as Dionysius, who felt that it was necessary to write against Nepos’ views.

Nepos’ eschatology had levelled a destructive force in the region of Arsinoë, Egypt, with various churches experiencing rampant schisms and apostasies. To combat these divisions, during a visit to Arsinoë Dionysius called together the ecclesial hierarchy to discuss matters. For three days he discussed with believers the views of the late Nepos and compared these with the Scriptures. The result was that the leader of the movement, Coracion, who had affirmed Nepos’ views, consented to the opinions of Dionysius and agreed to cease his chiliastic teachings.

This historical context is important, for it is after this description of the events in Arsinoë that Dionysius goes on to address the issue that “some before us” attributed John’s Apocalypse to Cerinthus. There is nothing in the evidence to lead to the conclusion that Montanism had been a part of the Nepos schism at all.

⁴²² C.E. Hill, “Cerinthus, Gnostic or Chiliast? A New Solution to an Old Problem,” *J ECS* 8 (2000), 149. Hill continues (*ibid.*), “Therefore, Skarsaune may be justified in concluding that Dionysius’ information about Cerinthus’ chiliasm had another source besides Gaius that is unknown to us.”

⁴²³ See Brent, *Hippolytus*, 136.

⁴²⁴ Perhaps Nepos was a later representative of the views against which Origen speaks in *De Princ.* 2.11.2, where he notes that some interpret the promises in a Jewish sense and believe that the future will include “bodily pleasure and luxury”.

Eusebius certainly does not make the connection. If Gaius' supposed attribution of John's Apocalypse to Cerinthus were a part of the equation then one would expect Eusebius to be more explicit in bringing together Gaius' testimony with the statements of Dionysius of Alexandria or at least align the Montanist issue with the Nepos schism.⁴²⁵ Eusebius, however, remains totally silent and offers no reason to believe that Gaius and Dionysius' "some before us" are directly connected.

I shall argue below that Epiphanius was reliant upon Dionysius of Alexandria for at least some of his information regarding antagonism towards the Apocalypse. This does not mean, however, that such a link must presuppose reliance upon Gaius of Rome as the ultimate source of these objections, as is often suggested.⁴²⁶ Such a view relies far too heavily on coincidence and fails to take into account the historical context in which Dionysius is writing and the issue he is addressing. Dionysius does not refer to Gaius by name, and his notice that "some before us" (τινὲς μὲν οὖν τῶν πρὸ ἡμῶν) in addition to the aorist plural verbs (ἠθέτησαν καὶ ἀνεσκεύασαν) suggest that this was the opinion of more than one man. It is therefore unlikely that Dionysius drew his information from a copy of Gaius' *Dialogue*.⁴²⁷ Furthermore, the common denominator between Gaius' statements and those of Dionysius is not Montanism, but Cerinthus' millennial views. If Cerinthus' "crude" chiliasm was well known, his association with both scenarios bears significant force.⁴²⁸ Aside from this there is little commonality.

There is, therefore, ample reason to seek answers to the question of Epiphanius' source(s) elsewhere. The solution that Gaius must be behind these criticisms and Hippolytus behind the responses requires the erroneous assumption that both of these figures held views that are not mentioned in any of their writings. To find an alternative solution, it is necessary to survey those writers that mention the Apocalypse prior to Epiphanius in order to determine if any of these earlier sources approximate the views Epiphanius associates with the *Alogi*.

⁴²⁵ Eusebius does juxtapose the testimonies of Gaius and Dionysius of Alexandria (*HE* 3.28.1-5), but not because they both refer to Montanism; rather it is because they share similar indictments of Cerinthus' chiliasm. When Eusebius reiterates Dionysius' testimony in fuller detail, Gaius of Rome and Montanism are nowhere to be seen.

⁴²⁶ E.g., Klijn and Reinink, 8; Smith, "Gaius", 426-7.

⁴²⁷ This was suggested by Bludau, 50-1, but this does not necessitate that Hippolytus and his putative work against Gaius must be the intermediary link, as Bludau supposed.

⁴²⁸ Cf. Skarsaune, 408; Campenhausen, *Formation*, 239; Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 175.

7.5 The Apocalypse Prior to Epiphanius

Initially, the Johannine Apocalypse was warmly received among a number of early Christian writers. Papias cites it,⁴²⁹ as do other writers such as Melito of Sardis (*HE* 4.26.2), Apollonius (*HE* 5.18.14) and Theophilus of Antioch (*Ad Autolycum* 2.28; *HE* 4.24.1).⁴³⁰ It is celebrated as the work of John the apostle in the writings of Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 81), Irenaeus (*AH* 4.20.11)⁴³¹ and Tertullian (*Adv. Marcion* 3.24). None of these writings, however, provide any matching characteristics of the *Alogi*'s anti-literal hermeneutical approach to the Apocalypse, or its attribution to Cerinthus.

For his part, Hippolytus accepts the Apocalypse as written by John the apostle (*Ant.* 36), and he comments on it throughout his *Commentary on Daniel* and *De Antichristo*. Later sources attribute Hippolytus with another commentary, now lost, entitled *De Apocalypsi*; however its authenticity has been questioned.⁴³² There is also the title of the lost work concerning the Gospel and Apocalypse of John that is listed on the statue of Hippolytus, and the *Apology* for the same works noted by Ebed-Jesu. The purpose, contents and historical existence of any lost work of Hippolytus are unknown. As with the sources noted above, the extant Hippolytan corpus does not provide any parallels with the nature of the *Alogi*'s criticisms or that Cerinthus was charged as the author of this work. Hippolytus does mention Cerinthus in his *Refutatio* (7.21-23; 10.21), but he provides no information to suggest that this heretic and the Johannine literature are in any way connected or confused with one another. Furthermore, the author of the *Muratorian Fragment*, perhaps Hippolytus, accepts the Apocalypse of John without qualification.

Origen also accepts the Apocalypse as canonical and certifiably Johannine (*Comm. Jo.* 2.4; *De Princip.* 1.2.10, 4.1.25; *C. Cels.* 6.6.6; *HE* 6.25.7-10). He notes in his *Commentary on Matthew* his intention to write a commentary on the Apocalypse, and Didymus the Blind claims knowledge of such a work;⁴³³ however,

⁴²⁹ See fragments 10, 11 and 24 in Lightfoot, Harmer and Holmes, 313-14, 318-19.

⁴³⁰ See A.C. Sundberg, Jr., "Canon Muratori: A Fourth-Century List," *HTR* 66 (1973), 23-4. Sundberg notes that Andreas of Caesarea (*in Apoc.* 34) also suggests that Papias used it.

⁴³¹ Here, John is referred to as the Lord's disciple, not as an "apostle".

⁴³² This is discussed in detail in Ch. 9.

⁴³³ See Weinrich, xxi, who notes the record of Didymus in *SC* 83, 123 and 84, 654-5.

if Origen did write such a work it has not survived in tact. There are, however, thirty-nine scholia on the Apocalypse discovered by the Greek scholar C. Diobouniotis and attributed to Origen by A. Harnack.⁴³⁴ Some have questioned their authenticity,⁴³⁵ however they possess the hallmark allegorical features that are intrinsic to Origen's hermeneutic such that Harnack's argument in favor of being from Origen remains, in my mind, the most plausible explanation. As I shall argue below, aspects of these scholia have parallels with the way in which Epiphanius reports the accusations of the so-called *Alogi* against the Apocalypse. Finally, there is a Latin text of an Irish Commentary containing various homilies on the Apocalypse. J. F. T. Kelly suggests that these came from Origen,⁴³⁶ but questions abound, particularly since Origen is mentioned for the first time in the prologue of only one manuscript of this very homiletical work, dated to the eighth century.

Later, Victorinus of Pettau wrote a *Commentary on the Apocalypse*.⁴³⁷ According to Jerome, who revised this work's chiliastic views, Victorinus replicated the anagogical hermeneutics of Origen (*Ep.* 61.2). This may be seen throughout Victorinus' commentary, although he also demonstrates reliance upon Hippolytus and Irenaeus. Even if Victorinus' *Commentary on the Apocalypse* does reflect some of Origen's views, nothing in his work aligns with the criticisms of the *Alogi* or makes any note of Cerinthus.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁴ Constantin Diobouniotis and Adolf von Harnack, *Der Scholien-kommentar zur Apokalypse Johannis nebst einem Stück aus Irenaeus, Lib. V, Graece.* TU 38, 3. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1911. See also the later revisions by C.H. Turner in two articles, "The Text of the Newly Discovered Scholia of Origen on the Apocalypse," *JTS* 13 (1912): 386-97; eadem, "Origen Scholia in Apocalypsin," *JTS* 25 (1924), 1-16.

⁴³⁵ In particular, as noted by E.J. Goodspeed ("Recent Patristic Literature," *American Journal of Theology* 20, n. 1 [1916], 116), Harnack's argument (*Scholien-kommentar*, 50) the conclusion that Origen is directly identified in Scholion XXIV could be wiped away with a small change in accentuation (*viz.* changing ὡς οὐ for ὧ σου), as originally noted by J.A.T. Robinson, "Origen's Comments on the Apocalypse," *JTS* 13 (1911), 296. However, Goodspeed maintains that this work is probably still from Origen even though no explicit attestation of his authorship is found in the Scholia themselves. Likewise, Robinson does not claim that the scholia are from anyone other than Origen.

⁴³⁶ J.F.T. Kelly, "Early Medieval Evidence for Twelve Homilies by Origen on the Apocalypse," *VC* 39, n. 3 (Sept. 1985): 273-9.

⁴³⁷ M. Dulaey (ed.), *Victorin de Poetovio: Sur l'Apocalypse et autres écrits.* SC 423 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1997).

⁴³⁸ M. Dulaey has attempted to decipher what elements of this work appear to be derived from Origen in *Victorin de Poetovio: Premier exégète Latin.* 2 Vols. Collection des Etudes Augustiniennes 139, 140. (Paris: Institut d'études Augustiniennes, 1993), 288-93; 295-99. Cf. Weinrich, xxii.

As time went on the place of John's Apocalypse in the list of accepted writings became more volatile, particularly along the eastern region of the Mediterranean.⁴³⁹ The turning point where it began to be heavily scrutinized came by way of Dionysius of Alexandria (ca. 265) in his work *On the Promises*. As noted above, Dionysius deemed the work to be acceptable, but only when interpreted spiritually (*HE* 7.25.4-5). After a careful exegetical analysis of the Apocalypse in comparison to the authenticity of the Gospel of John, the differences in content and vocabulary caused him to deny the author of the former was John the Apostle, the son of Zebedee (*HE* 7.25.7), though he refuses to reject it or attribute it to Cerinthus, as "some" before him had done. He suggests rather that it may have come from a different "John" (*HE* 7.25.9-27).

Later, Eusebius affirms Dionysius' view that it may have been written by another "John" (*HE* 3.39.6; cf. 3.25.4), and his suspicions of its chiliastic teachings are well known.⁴⁴⁰ By the middle of the fourth century, Cyril of Jerusalem had chosen not to include it in his canonical list (*Catech.* 4.36); nor did it make the contemporary lists of Gregory of Nazianzus (*Carmen* 1.1.12.39), the *Apostolic Constitutions* (7.47.85) or the Syriac Peshitta.⁴⁴¹

Finally, in the last quarter of the same century, Epiphanius demonstrates his own ambivalence towards the Apocalypse of John. At the beginning of his account of the *Alogi*, he makes it clear that he would understand if these heretics only rejected Apocalypse of John (*Haer.* 51.3.4). The fact that he devotes such an insignificant portion of his testimony to defending the Apocalypse suggests his lack of any real concern for this work.⁴⁴²

Thus, while John's Apocalypse retained much of its positive status in the west, there is a discernibly less-than-enthusiastic reception over time in the east.⁴⁴³ It is important to note that out of all these witnesses, those with the clearest parallels to Epiphanius' account are Dionysius of Alexandria and Origen. From Eusebius it is

⁴³⁹ Stephen Davis, "Introducing an Arabic Commentary on the Apocalypse: Ibn Kâtib Qaysar on Revelation," *HTR* 101 (Jan. 2008), 78.

⁴⁴⁰ See esp. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 131ff.

⁴⁴¹ See Davis, 78-9; Sundberg, 24-5.

⁴⁴² As noted in Chapter 2, less than ten per cent of his account of the *Alogi* concerns the Apocalypse. Epiphanius addresses the criticisms of the Apocalypse only in *Haer.* 51.32-4.

⁴⁴³ Davis, 79.

known that Dionysius' *On the Promises* is, at least in part, an examination of the entire Apocalypse in an effort to demonstrate that it is impossible to understand literally (*HE* 7.25.6). It is well known that his predecessor and mentor, Origen, advocates a spiritual hermeneutic as well. Much of the Origen's scholia on the Apocalypse reflect the style of criticism that the *Alogi* had against the Apocalypse. In fact, the parallels between the views of Origen and Dionysius of Alexandria as well as the *Alogi* are close enough to suggest that the criticisms of the *Alogi* against the Apocalypse fit squarely within the hermeneutical milieu of both of these writers.

7.6 The Influence of Origen and Dionysius of Alexandria on Epiphanius

In light of the preceding chapters where Origen's fingerprints are clearly seen in the objections to the Gospel of John, it is not surprising to find that he may have influenced Epiphanius' account of the *Alogi*'s criticisms of the Apocalypse as well. Furthermore, the statements of Origen's protégé, Dionysius of Alexandria, have direct parallels with Epiphanius' account, particularly in his notice pertaining to the attribution of the Apocalypse to Cerinthus.

Although the writings of Origen and Dionysius about the Apocalypse are either lost or preserved only in part, there are important parallels between the accusations of the *Alogi* and the hermeneutical perspective of these two Alexandrian writers, as well as their surviving fragments. It is true that by appealing to these works I must inevitably conclude in presuming the content of works that are no longer fully extant – a point that I have been very critical of so far. There are, however, important distinctions to be drawn between the contents of a hypothetical work of Hippolytus and that which may be gleaned from the accounts of Origen and Dionysius. If Harnack is correct that the scholia are truly Origenian, as I believe they are, then these fragments further elucidate his views on the Apocalypse. Interestingly, they find important parallels with Epiphanius' testimony. Moreover, even though Eusebius reproduces only part of Dionysius' *On the Promises*, that which he does preserve as well as Eusebius' own comments about this work provide valuable portals into its content. Although it is imperative to proceed with caution, that which remains of these works provides is adequate to locate parallels between these sources and Epiphanius' *Alogi*.

Although Origen accepts the Apocalypse, he is quick to denounce those who understand it literally. For example, in his work *De Principiis* (2.11), Origen issues a scathing critique of those who understand the promises of the future millennium in this way. Such interpreters, according to Origen, are wrong to understand this text “in a Jewish manner”,⁴⁴⁴ adopting a superficial view of the letter of the law (*De Princ.* 2.11.2). Throughout this work Origen is responding to chiliastic views in such a way that, as Hill notes, “His onslaught is practically merciless, as he scolds the literalists...for being too lazy to use their heads and too hospitable to their carnal impulses.”⁴⁴⁵ He condemns those who understand the promises as referring to things of this life, as though what exists now will exist again in the future. This is also a primary concern of Dionysius of Alexandria in his work, *On the Promises* (*HE* 7.24.5).⁴⁴⁶

There are numerous instances throughout Origen’s works where he claims that the literal sense of Scripture simply cannot be true.⁴⁴⁷ It is seen in his scholia on the Apocalypse, and in some important instances there are parallels with what Epiphanius says about the opinions of the *Alogi*. For example, Origen interprets the “voice of the trumpet” (Rev. 4:1) spiritually as “the magnitude of understanding with perspicuity that came to [John].”⁴⁴⁸ Similarly, the first objection of the *Alogi* finds no literal value in the notice about the trumpets (*Haer.* 51.32.2). Elsewhere, regarding Rev. 2:21 Origen speaks of Jezebel as one who had a “damned nature”.⁴⁴⁹ It is interesting to note how Epiphanius interprets this passage differently in his response to the second objection of the *Alogi* to the Apocalypse. Here, he downplays the promiscuity of Jezebel in Rev. 2:21, choosing rather to emphasize her role as a prophetess in Rev. 2:20 (*Haer.* 51.33.8) in order to draw a parallel with the Montanist prophetesses: “Do you not see, that he is speaking about the women about

⁴⁴⁴ Cf. Hanson, 237.

⁴⁴⁵ C.E. Hill, *Regnum Caelorum: Patterns of Millennial Thought in Early Christianity*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 177.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, n. 5.

⁴⁴⁷ For a number of examples, see Hanson, 239-41.

⁴⁴⁸ See Diobouniotis and Harnack, frag. XXV, 32; cf. Hanson, 343-4.

⁴⁴⁹ Diobouniotis and Harnack, frag. XVII, 29.

whom he means the prophets who are deceived and deceiving others; I mean Priscilla, Maximilla and Quintilla.”⁴⁵⁰

Moreover, similarities between Origen and Epiphanius’ testimony might be seen with the criticism regarding the lack of any Church in Thyatira. As noted in Chapter 5, Origen notes that “Bethany” in Jn. 1:28 should actually be rendered “Bethabara” (*Comm. Jo.* 6.24). In the same passage he also notes that the town of “Gergesa” should actually be called “Gerasa”. Origen demonstrates his awareness of, and concern with, Christian geography such that the fact that there was no Church in Thyatira would be something in which he would have been interested.

It is true that none of the scholia of Origen on the Apocalypse directly parallels the objections of the *Alogi*, but those fragments that have survived provide an important indication of his overall perspective. If one broadens the scope of the present analysis, it is possible to detect additional connections between the accusations of the *Alogi* and the views of Origen. Most notably, the *Alogi*’s objections do not convey any real attempt to disprove the authenticity of the Apocalypse, nor do they resonate with the style of criticisms one would find in a polemical work. They are, in the words of J. Gwynn, the musings of a “captious critic”, which is a charge that could be levelled against Origen’s attempts to demonstrate the points in Scripture where it is incapable of being understood literally. Indeed, the criticisms of the *Alogi* are targeted against a literal understanding of Scripture, such as what is found throughout Origen’s commentaries (and perhaps Dionysius’ comments which are known only through Eusebius’ gloss [*HE* 7.25.6]). They are exactly the type of criticisms Origen would raise to argue that it should not be interpreted literally.

Thus, although these scholia bear only indirect parallels with the criticisms of the *Alogi*, it is conceivable that Origen’s hermeneutical methodology influenced Epiphanius, particularly if Epiphanius had a full copy of this work. However, Origen does not associate in any way Cerinthus with the Apocalypse, nor does he mention any call to reject it. Yet Origen’s views would have influenced those of his protégé, Dionysius of Alexandria, who not only mentions the arch-heretic but also endeavored to show how it was unintelligible when read literally. In fact, W. H. C.

⁴⁵⁰ *GCS* 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 308.

Frend has suggested the possibility that an Origenian work on the Apocalypse may be behind the comments made by Dionysius.⁴⁵¹

Dionysius of Alexandria

Without a doubt the clearest and most viable connection between Epiphanius' testimony regarding the Apocalypse and the early extant literature is the testimony of Dionysius of Alexandria. In *HE* 7.25, Dionysius takes an identical position to that of Origen concerning a literal interpretation of the Apocalypse. It is wrong to think that there will be a thousand years of bodily pleasures that will contain eating and drinking and marrying in an earthly Jerusalem (*HE* 7.25.1-3). But Dionysius differs from his mentor on a few crucial points. Most notably, he attributes this view to Cerinthus; Origen does not. This is how Eusebius records the words of Dionysius:

Some before us (τινὲς...πρὸ ἡμῶν) have set aside (ἡθέτησαν) and dismantled (ἀνεσκεύασαν) the whole book, amending (διευθύνοντες) each chapter, and displaying it as unintelligible (ἄγνωστόν) and illogical (ἄσυλλόγιστον), and maintaining that the title is a lie. For they say (λέγουσιν) that it is not from John, nor is it a revelation because it is covered thickly and deeply by a curtain of ignorance (ἄγνοίας). And they say that none of the apostles, neither the saints, nor anyone in the church wrote it, but that Cerinthus, who founded the sect, which is called the Cerinthians after him, desiring trustworthy authority for his own forgeries, assigned the name. (*HE* 7.25.1-2)⁴⁵²

In his following statements, Dionysius is careful not to reject the Apocalypse just because he does not understand its meaning. Even though he sets out to prove it cannot be understood literally, he is convinced that there is a concealed, deeper meaning behind the words (*HE* 7.25.4). After this statement, Eusebius breaks from his citation of Dionysius' work to offer his own summary of its contents. "After these things he [Dionysius] examined closely (βασανίσας) the entire book of the Apocalypse. And he has shown that it is not possible to understand it literally" (*HE* 7.25.6).⁴⁵³ Tragically, this brief summary is all that is known of the contents of this portion of his work.

There are two distinct critical analyses of Revelation mentioned in Dionysius' testimony. On the one hand, Dionysius mentions those that came before him who

⁴⁵¹ See J.F.T. Kelly (278), who notes that Frend made this comment in regards to Origen's supposed work, *Homilies on the Apocalypse*; although given the examples from the scholia it is possible that this may have also born some influence as well.

⁴⁵² *GCS* 6,2, 690.

⁴⁵³ *GCS* 6,2, 692.

rejected it as a forgery of Cerinthus (*HE* 7.25.1-3). Nothing is known of the actual contents of this work, nor does Dionysius agree with their views. Rather, in light of these prior accusations Dionysius provides his own analysis of the Apocalypse. Sadly, there is no recourse but to take Eusebius at his word when he says that Dionysius' analysis proved that it is impossible to understand it literally.

Nevertheless, all of the necessary ingredients for Epiphanius' description of the *Alogi*'s views of the Apocalypse are present. Not only is this the first instance where it is charged that this work was written by Cerinthus, it is clear that Dionysius could not endorse a literal interpretation. It is possible that Epiphanius had access to the source Dionysius references, however, because Dionysius' hermeneutics were similar to Origen's, the work *On the Promises* may have been all that Epiphanius needed.

Furthermore, there are other traces in Epiphanius' account of the *Alogi* that may bolster the likelihood that he was pulling from the record of Dionysius. As noted in Chapter 2, if Hill is correct, Epiphanius may have been inspired to name this heresy the "*Alogi*" based on Dionysius' statement that those before him declared the Apocalypse "unintelligible" (ἄγνωστόν) and "illogical" (ἄσυλλόγιστον).⁴⁵⁴ Moreover, a few lines after Epiphanius introduces this sect as the Ἄλογοι, he addresses the question of whether or not John the apostle is the true author of these works.

For they allege as an excuse, being ashamed to speak against St. John on account of [their] knowledge that he was one of the apostles and the Lord's beloved, who rightly revealed mysteries to him who reclined on [the Lord's] breast, these people attempt to overturn [him] for other reasons. For they say that they are not from John, but Cerinthus, and they say that they are not worthy to be in the Church (*Haer.* 51.3.6).⁴⁵⁵

This could most certainly be applied to those who, according to Dionysius, attributed the Apocalypse to Cerinthus. But Epiphanius also makes it clear that the so-called *Alogi* also knew that John the Apostle wrote it, yet they "make excuses" for why they cannot accept it. Dionysius' lengthy argument to prove that John the apostle was *not* the author of the Apocalypse (*HE* 7.25.7-27) certainly fits this description.

⁴⁵⁴ Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 187: "...the alpha-privative adjectives they used to slander John's Apocalypse could have given Epiphanius the idea for his pejorative Ἄλογοι."

⁴⁵⁵ *GCS* 31,2 *Epiphanius II*, 251.

There is one other tangential piece of evidence that links Dionysius and Epiphanius. Dionysius is the first to mention Cerinthus' sect as "Cerinthian" (Κηρινθιανῶν; *HE* 3.28.4; 7.25.2).⁴⁵⁶ Epiphanius repeats this title elsewhere in his *Panarion* (cf. *Haer.* 28.1.1, 8.1).

Given that there is no surviving copy of Dionysius' *On the Promises*, it is impossible to know for certain that this was Epiphanius' source. Nevertheless, the nature of the criticisms of the Apocalypse recorded by Epiphanius fit squarely within the hermeneutical milieu of Dionysius and his mentor, Origen. Moreover, Dionysius is the first to mention the fact that some believed John's Apocalypse to be a Cerinthian forgery. It is also conceivable that just as Epiphanius had a limited knowledge concerning Irenaeus' comments about an anonymous group that rejected the Gospel of John (*AH* 3.11.9), and filled in the details with the criticisms of Origen,⁴⁵⁷ he have done with same with Dionysius' comments concerning another anonymous group rejected the Apocalypse as the work of Cerinthus and used this as the foundation for the latter part of his testimony.

Finally, it is important to note that while there is earlier evidence that links the Apocalypse with Cerinthus, nowhere prior to Epiphanius is there any mention of Cerinthus being the author of the Gospel of John. As demonstrated at the beginning of this chapter and as I shall explain in further detail in Chapter 9, I find no reliable evidence to support Smith's view that this charge was made in a lost work of Hippolytus. Rather, I suggest that Epiphanius has amalgamated the testimony of Irenaeus (*AH* 3.11.9) concerning the Gospel of John with the words of Dionysius of Alexandria (*HE* 7.25.1-4) on the Apocalypse, in addition to a variety of other sources I have discussed in the previous chapters. Although each of these testimonies is a contributing factor to his description of the *Alogi*, on their own, none of them fully reflects all of the characteristics that Epiphanius attributes to this heresy. Thus, in light of the evidence, I find it necessary to conclude that Epiphanius has applied Dionysius' comments regarding some who consider Cerinthus as the author of the Johannine Apocalypse more broadly to include the Gospel of John.

⁴⁵⁶ Klijn and Reinink (8) wrongly state that Epiphanius was the first to provide this title.

⁴⁵⁷ See Chapters 4.2 and 5.4, 5.5.

SECTION III

The Obfuscation and Clarification of the Alogi

Throughout the preceding sections, a distinct picture has emerged from the earliest evidence. The *Alogi* is the product of conflating a number of disparate sources into a single category by the fourth century father, Epiphanius. The concerns of the bishop of Salamis are focused on what he perceives to be antagonism towards the Gospel and Apocalypse of John founded upon the testimonies of Irenaeus and Dionysius of Alexandria. From these notices, Epiphanius constructs the particular tenets that he attributes to the so-called *Alogi* from the writings of Origen as well as other critics and abusers of the Johannine literature such as Celsus, the Ebionites, the Valentinians and others.

However, nearly a millennium after the era in which Epiphanius situates the *Alogi* additional information emerged in the writings of Dionysius bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu. This later evidence contains information that is not found in the earliest sources, and has thus proven to be a gold mine for scholarship over the past century. As a result, the balance of the evidence has shifted and the fulcrum upon which an important portion of church history rests has gone from underpinning the evidence from the earliest Fathers to that of the Syrian sources separated from this history by a significant length of time. When preference is given to this later evidence, a very different story begins to emerge. For one thing, Gaius of Rome, an “orthodox” representative of the third century Roman church, emerges as a paradoxical figure that wilfully tossed aside the Johannine literature in his anti-heretical efforts. The later Syrian evidence has also given sway to the prevalent notion of a “Johannine Controversy” that supposedly permeated the early church’s efforts to establish its own literary foundations by eliminating the “heretical” forgeries, including the Gospel and Apocalypse of John.

What, then, does one make of the later evidence that paints a very different picture of Gaius, the *Alogi* and the early ecclesiastical struggle to accept the Johannine corpus? In order to substantiate the view that the *Alogi* are a fictional heretical construct, it is necessary to disprove the opposing narrative. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to provide clarification to the evidence that has obfuscated the picture of the *Alogi*, Gaius of Rome and the early ecclesiastical sentiments

towards the Johannine corpus. The first task is to look at Gaius in his historical and theological context. The first portion of this section demonstrates that the earliest evidence does not definitively link Gaius with the *Alogi*. Indeed, rather than identifying Gaius as a “heretic” who rejected the Gospel and Apocalypse of John as works of Cerinthus, the earliest extant evidence portrays him as an orthodox member who was praised for his work against Montanism. Thus, whereas Smith sought to “rehabilitate” Gaius as a staunch defender of early orthodoxy by rejecting the Johannine writings as a method of dispelling heresy, I argue that the early evidence suggests that this perspective wrongly impugns Gaius for a crime he did not commit. Gaius was indeed an early orthodox member of the Roman Church, however his views of the Johannine corpus were in line with broader ecclesiastical sentiments that did not view these writings as worthy of repudiation.

It is only from the later Syrian evidence that a certain individual with the name “Gaius” is deemed to be heretical, and from this evidence correlations between Gaius and the *Alogi* begin to emerge. This dubious connection will be the focus of the second part of this section. Bar Salibi himself never claims that Gaius is to be identified with the *Alogi*. In fact, the connection between Gaius and the *Alogi* is the product of modern scholarship. For this connection to be sustainable, the earlier evidence must be interpreted in light of the later sources. This leads to the three fundamental assumptions that support the connection of Epiphanius’ testimony of the *Alogi* with that of bar Salibi, which are addressed throughout this section. These may be summarized as follows.⁴⁵⁸

I. Hippolytus wrote a work in which he specifically attacked Gaius’ rejection of the Gospel and Apocalypse of John.

a. This work must be an Hippolytan apologetic treatise on the Apocalypse and Gospel of John, which is evidenced by a title on the plinth of the statue of Hippolytus in Rome ([τ]ὰ ὑπὲρ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως).⁴⁵⁹ It is further argued that this work listed on the statue is the same as a Hippolytan treatise listed

⁴⁵⁸ See Smith, “Gaius”, 203-4, where he lists similar points that may be “unequivocally stated on the basis of the fragments preserved by bar Salibi in his commentaries on Revelation and John.”

⁴⁵⁹ Accented Greek from Brent, *Hippolytus*, 144; modified here only in the word κατὰ which Brent leaves without the accent.

in the fourteenth-century *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu (ἀπολογία ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀποκαλύψεως καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰωάννου).⁴⁶⁰

b. This Hippolytan work is also identified by many scholars with another work in the *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu, the *Heads against Gaius* (κεφάλαια κατὰ Γαΐου), as one in the same, given their juxtaposition of presentation in the *Catalogue*.

II. Epiphanius is primarily dependent upon this lost work of Hippolytus for his testimony of the *Alogi*, but he omitted Gaius' name.

III. Dionysius bar Salibi also possessed this Hippolytan work and provided a summary of the exchange between Gaius and Hippolytus.

There are serious difficulties with nearly every piece of this puzzle. First, there is reason to question the reliability of the testimony of bar Salibi in recounting what *actually* happened a millennium earlier. There are also textual issues within the commentaries themselves. Moreover, in light of the preceding chapters, there is ample evidence to suggest that Epiphanius and bar Salibi did not share the same source. Given this, it is necessary to establish where bar Salibi derived his information. Furthermore, there are many complex issues surrounding the identification of the works listed in Ebed-Jesu's *Catalogue* with the inscription upon the chair of the statue in Rome, which is supposedly representative of Hippolytus. By examining the sources for these later witnesses, I shall explain the reasons for the marked dissonance in the portrait of Gaius that emerges from the commentaries of bar Salibi in contrast to what is known of Gaius from the earliest sources.

⁴⁶⁰ Greek translation of the Syriac *Catalogue* titles (*Apology* and *Heads* in the following paragraph) is taken from Lightfoot, *AF* i, 2, 350.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Gaius of Rome

*Was Gaius orthodox or heretical? Or, was Gaius orthodox and heretical?*⁴⁶¹

Gaius of Rome has come to personify the antagonism with which the early church treated the Johannine literature. In what has been deemed the “definitive”⁴⁶² study of Gaius of Rome, J. D. Smith, Jr. states, “There is *only one known so-called ‘Alogi’* who rejected the Gospel of John and Revelation and denied that John the disciple was the author, and *he is the historical Gaius of Rome. All the evidence of criticisms against the Gospel of John and Revelation, their rejection, and denial of apostolic authorship can be traced back to Gaius of Rome and to no other person or group.*”⁴⁶³

Smith goes on to conclude his Ph.D. dissertation by heralding his successful “*rehabilitation of Gaius as an early biblical critic.*”⁴⁶⁴ This forces the question, which side is Gaius on? Is he orthodox or heretical? In his analysis it is clear that Smith wants it both ways. Gaius is indeed the lone member of the “heresy” known as the *Alogi*, but his views, at least in his own time, were actually representative of the early Roman ecclesiastical sentiments towards the Johannine literature. According to Smith, Gaius was “unequivocally on the side of orthodoxy” in his fight against Montanism and his rejection of the Johannine literature was actually “in the service of the church in Rome.”⁴⁶⁵

From a later perspective such a position is seen as incompatible; but in the second and third centuries it was not so anomalous. According to some modern estimations, Irenaeus tried, and failed, to exterminate Gaius’ dangerous views (cf. *AH* 3.11.9), however in the end Irenaeus overstated his case, for his idea of a four-

⁴⁶¹ Smith, “Gaius,” 2. Italics those of Smith.

⁴⁶² Culpepper, *John*, 137, n. 86.

⁴⁶³ Smith, “Gaius,” 426-7.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 430.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 429. Here Smith follows closely the views of Schwartz (“Über den Tod,” 93), who describes Gaius in precisely the same way.

fold Gospel canon was simply that – an “idea”, not a reality.⁴⁶⁶ Nor would it become a reality for some time.⁴⁶⁷ This is true at least for the epicenter of nascent Christianity, Rome, where, “To around the close of the second century, history is unable to name a single orthodox Roman for whom the Fourth Gospel had been of any significance.”⁴⁶⁸

As the argument goes, for the true status of the Gospel canon in the early church one must look not to Irenaeus, but to the accused. Thus, one must look to Gaius of Rome, who by modern (and ancient) accounts was a “conservative” Roman ecclesiastical leader who defended local Roman orthodox tradition against “innovative” foreign theologies that were potentially undermining of the truth of the Gospel. He was also a careful biblical critic, “quite competent and astute in his rhetorical and exegetical skills.”⁴⁶⁹

Yet many scholars have pushed Gaius’ role in the early church further. It was because of Gaius’ careful study of the differences amongst the four canonical Gospels that later Church Fathers took seriously his analysis and wrestled with the issue of which works should constitute the Christian canon of Scripture. From this view, Gaius is an underappreciated leader of the early church; one to whom subsequent Christianity owes a debt of gratitude for his preservation and promulgation of orthodoxy. Therefore, Gaius is praised for his orthodoxy while also condemned for his heterodoxy.

⁴⁶⁶ E.g. Schwatz, “Über den Tod,” 42: “Irenäus literarische Polemik war für die Praxis des römischen Bischofs nicht maßgebend.” Likewise, G.M. Hahneman (101), in support of his later dating of the *Muratorian Fragment*, argues that Irenaeus’ four-fold Gospel must have been “something of an innovation, for if a Fourfold Gospel had been established and generally acknowledged, then Irenaeus would not have offered such a tortured insistence on its numerical legitimacy”. This view, while prevalent, is not universal. For an opposing view, see Stanton, “Fourfold Gospel,” 319ff., esp. 322: “By the time Irenaeus wrote in about 180 AD, the fourfold Gospel was very well established. Irenaeus is not defending an innovation, but explaining why, unlike the heretics, the church has four gospels, no more, no less.” Also, Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?*, 34-68, and Hengel, *Four Gospels*, 10: “He [Irenaeus] certainly did not invent this collection [of the Gospel “canon”] himself; it had already existed for quite a long time in the mainstream church, largely recognized and used in worship.”

⁴⁶⁷ Elaine Pagels (*Beyond Belief*, 111), for example, argues that it was not until the fourth century when Athanasius “took up and extended Irenaeus’s agenda” of the four-fold Gospel. See also Lee M. McDonald, “The Gospels in Early Christianity: Their Origin, Use, and Authority,” in Stanley E. Porter (ed.), *Reading the Gospels Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 150-178. McDonald notes (170), “Irenaeus’s acceptance of the four canonical Gospels alone was not generally shared by his contemporaries or even by many Christians at a later time.”

⁴⁶⁸ Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 208.

⁴⁶⁹ Smith, “Gaius”, 430-31.

8.1 The Gaian Paradox

Gaius' attempt to protect the Roman church from the Montanist heresy by means of rejecting the Johannine literature creates a paradox where Gaius is both orthodox and heretical. Many modern scholars conclude that it is not his fault that later church tradition would turn its back on his conservative, protectionist views that rightly saw the Johannine literature (and especially those heretical views that used the Gospel of John to support their errant theologies such as the Montanists and the Gnostics) as a threat to the integrity of the church. Gaius was a man of the times, and his opposition to the Johannine writings for the sake of orthodoxy was nothing if not the status quo. Regarding the early ecclesiastical view of Gaius and the Roman Church, Walter Bauer maintained, "It was thus permissible for a Roman Christian from these circles, and an officeholder as well, to consider not only the Apocalypse but even the gospel of John as a forgery of the gnostic Cerinthus."⁴⁷⁰ Likewise, Streeter claimed, "All the same, the fact that it was possible to attribute the Fourth Gospel to an arch-heretic and yet regard oneself as championing orthodoxy is quite eloquent."⁴⁷¹ R. M. Grant is more explicit in his conclusion: "Gaius and the Alogi (who are probably to be identified) were the staunch upholders of old Roman orthodoxy and its triad of gospels which had weathered the Marcionite controversy but was being found insufficiently explicit for heresy-vexed followers of the incarnate Word."⁴⁷² Contemporary estimations of Gaius are equally affirming of the Gaian paradox. R. A. Culpepper notes, "Gaius's standing as a leader of the church at Rome shows that the authority of John and its apostolic authorship were not so firmly established (at least in Rome...) that it could not be challenged by one of the scholars of the church."⁴⁷³

The story of Gaius as the conservative Roman church official who remained true to his orthodox sensibilities and thus rejected the questionable Johannine literature is a very compelling theory, and the more it is repeated the stronger its authority appears to be. And while it is certainly one way of calibrating a meagre

⁴⁷⁰ Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 207.

⁴⁷¹ Streeter, 440.

⁴⁷² Grant, "Fourth Gospel and the Church," 109.

⁴⁷³ Culpepper, 121.

pool of evidence, I believe that this conclusion, while convenient, is misguided. The purpose of this chapter is to address the serious and pertinent questions regarding whether the Gaian paradox is sustainable, with specific attention paid to whether he did, in fact, reject the Gospel of John.

It is therefore necessary to first take a closer look at the evidence concerning Gaius. For a ranking ecclesiastical figure in Rome whose influence was supposedly widespread, there is an astonishing paucity of evidence concerning this man. When his name does appear, many ecclesiastical writers that would have found Gaius' supposed denunciation of the Gospel of John (and to a lesser extent John's Apocalypse) to be reprehensible speak of him very fondly. This calls into question whether bar Salibi's *Caius haereticus* is to be identified with the historical Gaius of Rome. Furthermore, a surprisingly small amount of attention has been paid to the dates of Gaius. His negative views of John's Gospel have been read into nearly every instance in which the integrity of this work has been questioned, from Irenaeus' anonymous opponents of the Johannine Paraclete, to the assumed defense of the Gospel of John in the *Muratorian Fragment*, and of course the work attributed to Hippolytus that (purportedly) defended the Gospel and Apocalypse of John against the views of Gaius. However, a more specific dating of Gaius precludes him from being read into any and every situation in which the Gospel of John appears volatile. By establishing the dates of Gaius, it will be possible to determine the limits of his influence.

Once a clearer picture of the evidence concerning Gaius' historical background has been established, it will be possible to consider more carefully Gaius' views on the Johannine literature. In the previous chapter, I demonstrated that the early evidence does not support the view that Gaius rejected the Apocalypse. The focus of this chapter is on whether Gaius held negative views of John's Gospel. This analysis concerning Gaius of Rome not only calls into question whether Gaius was at the center of the so-called "Johannine Controversy", it also provides a foundation upon which the evidence from Dionysius bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu may be considered in the following chapter.

8.2 The Historical and Literary Legend of Gaius: The Evidence

To determine the importance of Gaius' role, whether positive or negative, it is important and necessary to consider all the evidence.⁴⁷⁴ Because so little is known of Gaius of Rome, his reputation is malleable, but not necessarily indiscernible. From all extant accounts up to the time of bar Salibi in the twelfth century, Gaius was the furthest thing from a heretic.

The first notice recorded of Gaius is that of Eusebius, who, upon reading his anti-Montanist polemical work against Proclus, labels him as an "ecclesiastical man" (ἐκκλησιαστικὸς ἀνὴρ; *HE* 2.25.6) and a "learned man" (λογιωτάτου ἀνδρός; *HE* 6.20.3).⁴⁷⁵ Despite the numerous scholarly annotations to the contrary, Eusebius does not speak of Gaius holding any official position within the Church.⁴⁷⁶ Twice over Eusebius states that Gaius operated during the pontificate of Zephyrinus (199-217 A.D.; *HE* 2.25.6; 6.20.3), and he notes that Gaius does not accept Pauline authorship of the book of Hebrews (*HE* 6.20.3). Eusebius is also the *only* witness who claims to have read Gaius' work, the *Dialogue with Proclus*, and he provides quotes from this work intermittently.

Around the turn of the fifth century Jerome would include Gaius in his list of *Illustrious Men*. It is safe to assume that the bulk of his information was taken directly from Eusebius,⁴⁷⁷ notably Gaius' role as a Roman anti-Montanist, his rejection of Pauline attribution of Hebrews and his activity during the pontificate of Zephyrinus (*De vir. ill.* 59). A bit later Theodoret admits to knowing nothing more of this Gaius beyond his authorship of a *Dialogue with Proclus* (*Haer. fab. comp.* 2.3, 3.2).

In the ninth century, Photius embellishes Gaius' reputation to one of even greater orthodox prestige. He claims to have found information on Gaius from a

⁴⁷⁴ For a catalogue of the evidence concerning Gaius prior to Gwynn's discovery of the bar Salibi commentaries, see Martinus Josephus Routh, *Reliquiae Sacrae*, Vol. II (Oxonii: Typis Academicis, 1814), 2-32. All of his notices are considered here as well.

⁴⁷⁵ A certain "Gaius" is also mentioned in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* (22.2), but there is little reason to connect him with Gaius of Rome; although Bludau (40) disagrees.

⁴⁷⁶ The listing of a certain "Gaius" as bishop of Rome in Eusebius' *Chronicon* does not comport with the dating of Gaius of Rome, for the Gaius of the *Chronicon* is dated ca. 282 CE. Also Eusebius is clear that Gaius was active while Zephyrinus was bishop, thus excluding a Gaian pontificate.

⁴⁷⁷ In the introduction to this work, Jerome states that Eusebius has been "of utmost importance" for his information.

“marginal note” (ἐν παραγραφῇ) in one of his sources that claimed Gaius was a presbyter in Rome and ordained “bishop of the nations” (ἐθνῶν ἐπίσκοπον; *Bibl.* 48). This information would not have come from the few, brief notices in Eusebius’ *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Photius records that “some” think the *Dialogue with Proclus* should be attributed to Josephus or Justin Martyr. But Photius places his trust in his unknown marginal source and reclaims this work as from the hand of Gaius, along with two other works, *On the Universe*, the *Labyrinth*, and *Against the Heresy of Artemon*.

In the twelfth century, Gaius’ legacy would change drastically. Dionysius bar Salibi († 1171 A.D.) records a series of five criticisms against the Apocalypse of John and one against John’s Gospel that he attributes to a heretic named “Gaius”. These objections, according to bar Salibi, arose in a dispute between Gaius and Hippolytus of Rome. About a century later (*ca.* 1300), Ebed-Jesu records a list of Hippolytan works that includes the title *Heads against Gaius*.⁴⁷⁸

In the middle of the eighteenth century, Ludovico Antonio Muratori, the discoverer of the oldest list of New Testament books (including the Gospel and Apocalypse of John) that bears his name, believed the author to be none other than Gaius the Presbyter (*viz.* Gaius of Rome).⁴⁷⁹ Muratori’s Gaian attribution is probably based largely on what he knew of Gaius from the record of Eusebius.⁴⁸⁰

Thus, aside from the late Syrian evidence, Gaius’ reputation had clearly blossomed posthumously, making him one of the great luminaries of the early church. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, Gaius would become stripped of much of his literary legacy. A number of works once attributed to Gaius were given to Hippolytus. For example, Lightfoot, Robinson and others eliminated Gaius as the author of the *Muratorian Fragment*, arguing that it actually came from the hand of Hippolytus.⁴⁸¹ Moreover, as a result of Lightfoot’s analysis, into

⁴⁷⁸ This evidence will be examined in detail in the following chapter.

⁴⁷⁹ Ludovico Antonio Muratori, *Antiquitates italicæ medii ævi*, Tom. III (Mediolani: ex typographia Societatis palatinae, 1738-1742) 809-880 at 851. The manuscript itself is number I 101 sup. Cf. Hahneman, 30.

⁴⁸⁰ Robinson, “Authorship,” 481.

⁴⁸¹ Here see esp. T. H. Robinson, “The Authorship of the Muratorian Canon,” *The Expositor* series 7, 1 (1906), 481-495; Lightfoot, *AF*, i, 2, 405-413; M. -J. Lagrange, “L’auteur du canon de Muratori,” *Revue Biblique* 35 (1926), 83-88. Cf. Brent, *Hippolytus*, 133.

Hippolytus' hands went nearly all the other works that Photius had attributed to Gaius, save the *Dialogue with Proclus*.⁴⁸²

8.3 Problems Identifying bar Salibi's *Caius* with Eusebius' Gaius of Rome

The question that should be asked, yet almost never is, centers around whether it is valid to identify bar Salibi's *Caius haereticus* with Gaius of Rome. As noted earlier, Lightfoot abandoned his theory that Gaius and Hippolytus are one and the same after Gwynn's discovery of the bar Salibi *Commentary on the Apocalypse* that clearly distinguishes Gaius and Hippolytus. However, Lightfoot closed his analysis with this caveat, "Gaius therefore is alive once more, though he seemed to me to be dead. But, whether this is really Gaius the Roman presbyter or another, may perhaps be still an open question."⁴⁸³ To my knowledge, no one has carefully considered this important question. The association of bar Salibi's *Caius* with Eusebius' Gaius of Rome and Epiphanius' *Alogi* is, in fact, far from certain.

It is generally taken for granted that bar Salibi is referring to the very same Gaius of Rome mentioned by Eusebius, Jerome and others. Yet the only biographical data about Gaius in the writings of bar Salibi comes from the introduction to his *Commentary on the Apocalypse* where he states, "Hippolytus of Rome said: 'A man appeared, named Gaius, who claimed that the Gospel was not by John, nor the Apocalypse, but by the heretic Cerinthus.'"⁴⁸⁴ This is in fact the sum total of bar Salibi's description of "Gaius" beyond describing him as a heretic. Following this, bar Salibi refers to him as "this Gaius" (*hunc Caium*),⁴⁸⁵ "Gaius the heretic" (*Caius haereticus*)⁴⁸⁶ or simply "Gaius" (*Caius*).⁴⁸⁷ The evidence from the manuscripts now housed in the British Library that Harris brought forward (and

⁴⁸² Lightfoot, *AF*, i, 2, 377-381; cf. Routh, 143. Though in 1947 Pierre Nautin argued that all the works attributed to Hippolytus on the Statue in Rome that now bears his image and those mentioned by Photius actually belong to the "Josephus" indicated in Photius' marginal note. See Nautin, *Hippolyte et Josipe*; eadem *Hippolyte, Contre les hérésies*. Nautin's theory has not received widespread acceptance.

⁴⁸³ Lightfoot, *AF*, i, 2, 388.

⁴⁸⁴ *Hippolytus Romanus dixit: Apparuit vir, nomine Caius, qui asserebat Evangelium non esse Iohannis, nec Apocalypsim, sed Cerinthis haeretici ea esse. Comm. Apoc.*, 1.

⁴⁸⁵ *Comm. Apoc. praescr.*, 2.

⁴⁸⁶ *idem*, 8-9 (in his comments on Rev. 8:8, 12; 20:2)

⁴⁸⁷ *idem*, 10 (in his comments on Rev. 9:2, 15).

minimized) takes us even further away from establishing the identity of this “Gaius”, for it is clear that bar Salibi originally failed to include his name in his *Commentary on John*. Nowhere does bar Salibi indicate that this “Gaius” is the same as the author of the *Dialogue with Proclus*, or that the “Gaius” of his commentary held any anti-Montanist sentiments. Nor does bar Salibi refer to Gaius as *Caius Romanus* as in the case of *Hippolytus Romanus*, and he does not state that “Gaius” rejected Hebrews as genuinely Pauline, as Eusebius and others noted.

The “Gaius” of bar Salibi has become identified as the author of the *Dialogue with Proclus* due to various inferential leaps that span some distance. Historically, bar Salibi places Gaius as an interlocutor with Hippolytus of Rome, thus situating him around the same time that Gaius of Rome lived. When taken together, the evidence from bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu in conjunction with the title on the statue of Hippolytus in Rome all suggest that Hippolytus wrote against a certain Gaius. Since both were contemporaries and located in the same city, this must be Gaius of Rome.

Textually, bar Salibi’s “Gaius” is assumed to be the same as “Gaius of Rome” due to a dubious reading of Eusebius’ notice in *HE* 3.28.1-2, where Gaius attacks Cerinthus’ *Apocalypse*. As discussed in the previous chapter, many have mistakenly interpreted Eusebius’ record to mean that Gaius of Rome attributed John’s Apocalypse to Cerinthus, thus linking Eusebius’ Gaius with bar Salibi’s *Caius haereticus*.

Yet there are important differences that often go unnoticed. For example, there is nothing in bar Salibi’s record of the criticisms of “Gaius” to insinuate that these had anything to do with Montanist eschatological views, let alone any opposition to the Johannine Paraclete, thus raising important questions as to whether bar Salibi’s source was Gaius’ *Dialogue with Proclus* and/or Hippolytus’ *Apology*, which supposedly was Hippolytus’ response to Gaius’ *Dialogue*.⁴⁸⁸ Nor do the criticisms relate in any way to the carnal millennium desired by Cerinthus, against which Gaius took such strong exception (cf. *HE* 3.28.1-2). What about the fact that Gaius of Rome did not consider the book of Hebrews to be Pauline, as noted by Eusebius (*HE* 6.20.3)? Bar Salibi mentions this, but he attributes this view to Hippolytus, not Gaius.⁴⁸⁹ Furthermore, the criticisms of *Caius haereticus* themselves

⁴⁸⁸ Smith, “Gaius”, 425-6.

⁴⁸⁹ *Comm. Apoc.*, 3-4. Cf. Photius (*Bibl.* 121) where he states that Hippolytus rejected Hebrews as a Pauline work. Bar Salibi’s omission of Gaius’ similar view is interesting.

do not reflect the stylings of Eusebius' "learned" man, Harris' "higher critic" or Smith's "reputable scholar". Simply put, *prima facie*, bar Salibi's designation of *Gaius haereticus* does not cohere with Eusebius' Gaius as ἐκκλησιαστικὸς ἀνὴρ.

Gaius of Rome, the Presbyter/Bishop?

The "Gaian paradox" is strengthened when one considers his supposedly high ecclesiastical rank from which he disseminated his anti-Johannine rhetoric. Yet the reference to the Eusebian Gaius holding an ecclesiastical office – a claim nowhere made by the Father of Church History – is only mentioned once by the anonymous author of the marginal note in Photius' records, where Gaius is said to have been "bishop to the nations".

Where did this information concerning Gaius' ecclesiastical rank originate? There are two explanations. First, if Hill and Brent are right, this is easily accounted for given the erroneous assumption by the author of Photius' marginal note that Gaius of Rome was the author of *The Labyrinth* (the tenth book of Hippolytus' *Elenchos*). In this work the author describes himself as an "adviser" (σύμβουλος) to a long list of various ethnic groups (Greeks, barbarians, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Egyptians, Lybians, Indians, Ethiopians, Celts and Latin generals, and all those living in Europe, Asia and Libya; *Ref.* 10.34.1).⁴⁹⁰ It is not difficult to see how the author of Photius' marginal comments could have garbled this information to reflect the author's role as ἐθνῶν ἐπίσκοπον. Furthermore, Photius' source may also have formed the dates he attributes to Gaius. We know from Eusebius that the work *Against Artemon*, which Photius' source attributed to Gaius, directly and repeatedly refers to the times of Victor and Zephyrinus (ap. *HE* 5.28.3-6, 8).⁴⁹¹ Secondly, if Lightfoot's early hypothesis were to be considered, as I believe it ought, then the confusion of Gaius and Hippolytus is to blame. In his *Refutation*, Hippolytus speaks of himself as holding an Episcopal office (*Ref. praef.*) and gives special addresses to the Gentiles as though they were his special charge (*Ref.* 10.31, 32, 34).⁴⁹²

⁴⁹⁰ See Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 197-8; Brent, *Hippolytus*, 132. For the Greek text, see Marcovich, 415.

⁴⁹¹ Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 198, n. 84; Brent, *Hippolytus*, 132.

⁴⁹² Lightfoot, "Caius or Hippolytus," 104.

Both explanations of this information are entirely possible, but not altogether necessary. After the analysis of Lightfoot, it is clear that whoever provided Photius' information was misinformed as to the true identity of Gaius, and thus the designation of him as "bishop" or "presbyter" is of uncertain value. This claim to office rests on the presumption that Gaius of Rome was the author of works that he never wrote. Perhaps Gaius did hold an office within the Church, but given that there is no reliable source to indicate this is the case it is unlikely.⁴⁹³ Photius' account is too confused and demonstrably unreliable to deserve much investment, and those sources that are chronologically nearest to Gaius and familiar with his work make no mention of him holding any office whatsoever.

Since there is no concrete evidence to prove that Gaius of Rome occupied an official church office, the Gaian paradox has become a bit less forceful. The question remains as to whether the paradox is true at all. If it is, then it must be the case that the "Gaius" in Eusebius' records is the same as that found in the record of bar Salibi. The evidence examined thus far leads away from a positive identification. However, if Smith is right, and Gaius of Rome personifies the Johannine controversy, then he is to be seen lurking behind Irenaeus' notice of an anonymous group opposed to the Johannine Paraclete, works of Hippolytus that have been lost in time, Origen's notice regarding issues of Gospel incompatibility, the implied defense of John's writings in the *Muratorian Fragment*, and Dionysius of Alexandria's anonymous predecessors that rejected the Apocalypse of John as a work by Cerinthus – a very busy man indeed for the apparent lack of anyone noticing his anti-Johannine exploits, and whose dates could span from the mid second century well into the third. Thus, in order to determine whether any of these associations are plausible it is critically important to establish the dates of Gaius' activity.

8.4 The Dates of Gaius

There is almost universal harmony amongst the sources regarding the dates of Gaius' battle against the Montanists. Eusebius mentions twice that Gaius was active in Rome during the episcopate of Zephyrinus (199-217). Jerome and Theodoret agree, and according to Photius' marginal note, Gaius' activity also included the

⁴⁹³ Contra Tabbernee, who, on the basis of Photius' testimony, states, "There is no reason to doubt that Gaius was a presbyter." Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 69.

earlier time of Victorinus (189-199) in addition to Zephyrinus. Although the dating of Gaius appears secure, the available sources that speak directly to his dates (with the exception of Photius) are ultimately reliant upon Eusebius' placement of the historical Gaius. Thus, some have argued that Eusebius was wrong and Gaius of Rome mounted his attack against the Gospel and Apocalypse of John much earlier than the beginning of the third century. The most notable arguments come from Schwartz and Smith.

Schwartz's Dating of Gaius

Schwartz called into question Eusebius' dating of Gaius in part because he maintained that Irenaeus' anonymous *Alii*, who rejected the Johannine Paraclete, must have been Gaius of Rome.⁴⁹⁴ He substantiated his position by appealing to Eusebius' notice that in his refutation of Proclus Gaius appeals to the Asiatic "trophy" of Peter and Paul, but not John. Schwartz argued that this indicated Gaius lived prior to the tradition of the Ephesian John as told by Polycrates in a letter to Victor, preserved in part by Eusebius (*HE* 3.31.3-4).⁴⁹⁵ He argued that around the time of A.D. 160 it was still possible to doubt the authenticity of John's Gospel without being excommunicated or branded a heretic, and so this must have been the date of Gaius' *Dialogue*.⁴⁹⁶ Thus, Eusebius wrongly believed Gaius to be contemporary with Hippolytus because of a *fictitious* dialogue between the two, fragments of which were in Eusebius' hands and are identical to the proof text of bar Salibi. This fictitious dialogue was the product of Hippolytus' own written refutation of Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus*, which Schwartz argued must have been written decades earlier.⁴⁹⁷

Schwartz's theory provides an explanation for why Gaius could reasonably be an "ecclesiastical man" and maintain his anti-Johannine convictions, but it

⁴⁹⁴ Schwartz, "Über den Tod," 41-2. Later, Grant ("Fourth Gospel and the Church," 108, n.77) concurred, noting that Gaius' objections are "pre-Irenaeus".

⁴⁹⁵ Schwartz, "Über den Tod," 41-2.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴⁹⁷ See also P. Ladeuze, 56-8, who argues that Gaius' *Dialogue* must have antedated Irenaeus' notice, and the reason Irenaeus uses the ambiguous terms *Alii* is that Gaius' position would not have constituted an heretical opinion in his own time.

requires a severe recalibration of the extant evidence.⁴⁹⁸ For one thing, Eusebius, who may have had his own misgivings about the Johannine Apocalypse, did not share any ambivalence towards John's Gospel. If Gaius had rejected only the Apocalypse, then Eusebius may have been comfortable with issuing his praise of Gaius; but if he also rejected the Gospel as a heretical forgery, it is beyond question that Eusebius would not have stamped Gaius so positively. This fact prevented later scholars such as Carl Schmidt⁴⁹⁹ from following Schwartz's original hypothesis, and with good reason. In abandoning Eusebius' dating of Gaius, Schwartz was left to create a history for Gaius out of thin air, with little to go on except Irenaeus' brief notice. Schwartz would later retract his original suggestion, choosing instead to affirm Gaius' dates as stated by Eusebius.⁵⁰⁰ Nevertheless, some modern scholars still presume an earlier date for Gaius of Rome.⁵⁰¹

Smith's Dating of Gaius

Smith has his own unique solution to this dilemma. He argues that Irenaeus was indeed responding to Gaius in *AH* 3.11.9, but not because he had read Gaius' objections in the *Dialogue*. Rather, the objections of Gaius against the Gospel of John for anti-Montanist reasons were still in an "oral stage" at the time Irenaeus responded. "It was not until fifteen or twenty years later that Gaius shaped these discussions and arguments in the form of a literary dialogue," and thus, "Irenaeus' comments reflected the early historical tradition of the Johannine controversy, *not* its literary tradition."⁵⁰² Though he accepts Eusebius' date of Gaius' *Dialogue*, as with Schwartz, Smith is left reconstructing a hypothetical history for Gaius.

The dating of Gaius is founded on either taking Eusebius' dating at face value or rejecting it and hypothesizing Gaius' dates earlier into the mid-second century. However, there is one other concrete piece of information that deserves attention: the

⁴⁹⁸ See Bardy, 358-9, n.1.

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. Schmidt, 436ff.

⁵⁰⁰ Schwartz, "Johannes und Kerinthos," 212-13.

⁵⁰¹ E.g. Culpepper (121) simply takes for granted the view that Irenaeus was responding to Gaius in *AH* 3.11.9.

⁵⁰² Smith, "Gaius", 279-80.

fact that Gaius battled with the Montanist leader, Proclus. If the dates of Proclus can be established, the dates of Gaius should become clearer.

The Dates of Proclus

Amidst all the confusion, this much is certain: Gaius wrote a treatise against the Montanist Proclus. Eusebius read it, liked what he found therein and dated it at the beginning of the third century. Despite the theories that date Gaius much earlier than Eusebius suggests, there is no evidence that Proclus was a pre-Irenaeus figure.

In addition to Eusebius' notices that establish Proclus and Gaius in the time of Zephyrinus, Ps.-Tertullian (*Adv. omn. haer.* 7.2) also states that Proclus headed up a division of adherents to the New Prophecy known as the Cataproclans, which Ps.-Tertullian contrasts with those who followed Aeschines (Cataeschinetans). He distinguishes the Aeschinian version of New Prophecy as decidedly modalist monarchian, for "they affirm Christ to be Son and Father." Is it possible to surmise from this that Proclus had encountered the monarchian controversy – with which Hippolytus is a well-known participant – and that his school of the New Prophecy had taken the more orthodox Christological fork in the road?

Tertullian, himself of Montanist convictions, places Proclus last in a list of venerated anti-Valentinian writers (following Justin Martyr, Miltiades and Irenaeus; *Adv. Val.* 5). He describes Proclus as "*Proculus noster*", which could simply imply Tertullian's fraternal identification within the New Prophecy,⁵⁰³ or one could interpret it as a designation that Proclus was a contemporary of Tertullian.⁵⁰⁴ In support of the latter, Tertullian is privy to personal details of Proculus (his eloquence and chastity in old age), thus suggesting that the two were personal acquaintances. If Proclus were a contemporary of Tertullian, and if the monarchianism against which Proclus reacted were of Sabellian⁵⁰⁵ variety (flourishing in the early third century), then Eusebius' dates of Proclus, and thus Gaius, may be correct after all.⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰³ E.g. Barnes, *Tertullian*, 44.

⁵⁰⁴ There is little reason to doubt Proclus and "Proculus" are to be identified as one in the same (cf. *De vir. ill.* 59). See Campenhausen, *Formation*, 233, n. 126.

⁵⁰⁵ Tertullian was also a critic of Sabellianism (*Adv. Prax.*). Hippolytus (*Ref.* 8.19) is aware of this division within Montanism, for he notes that some of the Montanists held similar beliefs to the Noetians, viz. that the Father and the Son are one in suffering and in death. Epiphanius describes Sabellius' beliefs as similar to that attributed to Aeschines (*Haer.* 62.1.4); so also does Didymus of

There is, in fact, no evidence that Proclus was active in the New Prophecy movement prior to Irenaeus. In light of this, Smith's dating of Gaius may finally be put to rest alongside the early view of Schwartz. Because Proclus is a third-century figure, Gaius' accusations against this Montanist leader belong around the same time. Thus, Eusebius' dating of Gaius complies with the other available evidence. Nevertheless, the tendency to see Gaius as the identity of Irenaeus' *Alii* is also based on the view that Gaius of Rome actually rejected the Gospel of John. Thus the question persists: is Gaius of Rome the same as bar Salibi's *Caius haereticus*? Is there validity to the Gaian paradox? If so, Gaius of Rome must have campaigned against the Johannine writings in his efforts to abolish Montanism.

8.5 Gaius and the Four-fold Gospel Canon

The status of the four-fold Gospel canon at the beginning of the third century is a crucial issue that remains the subject of much debate. Was the Gospel of John still on the outer fringes of early ecclesiastical acceptance by this time, or had Irenaeus' four-Gospel canon become a permanent fixture? Gaius of Rome is said to have rejected this as a heretical forgery, thus raising questions about his role in affecting the Gospel canon.⁵⁰⁷ However, the evidence to support this conclusion is built on a delicate sequence of inferences. When the evidence is carefully scrutinized, the conclusion that emerges from historical and textual analysis suggests that Gaius has wrongly been accused of a crime that he did not commit.

If Gaius did reject the Gospel of John, there should be a literary trail that leads back to Gaius himself as well as corroborating historical evidence from this

Alexandria (*De Trin.* 3.41). According to Didymus, this teaching originated from an oracle of Montanus in which he states, "I am the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost." For his part, Jerome makes the explicit connection between Montanism and Sabellianism (*Ep.* 41.3). Lawlor (*Evsebian*, 111) held that the Montanists "taught what later became known as Sabellianism." In addition to Didymus, Lawlor also notes the record of Asterius Urbanus (*ap. HE* 5.16.17) who cites Maximilla as saying "I am Word and Spirit and Power", which, according to Lawlor (*ibid.*), "for the words ῥῆμα, πνεῦμα, and δύναμις must be taken as equivalent to Montanus's Son, Spirit and Father." Lawlor is correct in noting that Tertullian was very much against the Monarchianistic tendencies of Praxeas, which further bolsters the present argument that the issue of Sabellianism caused a split in the Montanist camp and the views of Tertullian and Proclus stood in sharp contrast to that of the Cataeschinians.

⁵⁰⁶ In his final article on the subject, E. Schwartz maintained this view. See "Johannes und Kerinthos," 212-14.

⁵⁰⁷ "If Gaius, a champion of orthodoxy, could reject the Johannine literature, can we be certain that the fourfold canon was irrevocably established at Rome?" Smith, "Gaius", 6-7.

period of time. This section will explore these two considerations in an attempt to discern Gaius' view of the Gospel of John.

8.6 The Textual Evidence

First, since Gaius is known to have written only one work against the Montanist leader Proclus, Gaius' antagonism towards John must be found therein.⁵⁰⁸ The testimony of Eusebius is therefore of unmatched value. As noted above, Eusebius learns from reading Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus* that he only accepts thirteen Pauline epistles, rejecting Hebrews (*HE* 6.20.3). Yet, he mentions nothing about Gaius' (supposed) negative views on John's Gospel. Eusebius is quick to note that Gaius' rejection of Hebrews from the Pauline corpus is still acceptable to some in Rome even in his own day. This should not be understood as a defense of Gaius *per se*, for Eusebius makes the same point earlier in his initial discussion of canonical and acknowledged texts (ἐδιαθήκων καὶ ὁμολογουμένων) and the disputed (ἀντιλεγομένων) texts (*HE* 3.3.5). Similarly, according to Photius who claims to have read the lost *Syntagma*, Hippolytus himself said that Paul was not the author of Hebrews (*Bibl.* 121).

The fact that Eusebius includes Gaius' negative views towards Hebrews is worthy of additional attention. Why does he mention this point, which would otherwise be one of little consequence? In fact, he records this view of Gaius because the delineation of which works he accepted is a primary theme of his *Dialogue with Proclus*. According to Eusebius, Gaius devotes his *Dialogue* to "curbing the indiscretion and boldness of the opposition who collect new scriptures" (*HE* 6.20.3).⁵⁰⁹

The criticism against Montanism's unique literature is nothing new. The Anonymous, for example, shows reluctance to engage in a debate with the Montanists, lest it seem that he were adding to the doctrines of the New Testament and the Gospels (*HE* 5.16.3). The Anonymous' citation of a Montanist oracle also

⁵⁰⁸ Culpepper (*John*, 121) argues that after Irenaeus had refuted his anti-Johannine position, "Some time later (ca. 202-203) Gaius wrote down his arguments against Montanism in the form of a *Dialogue with Proclus*. In this treatise Gaius explained his rejection of the Gospel and Revelation on literary-historical grounds..."

⁵⁰⁹ *GCS* 6,2, 566.

suggests they had already been written down (*HE* 5.16.17).⁵¹⁰ Apollonius mentions a certain “catholic epistle” (καθολικὴν ἐπιστολήν) written by the Montanist Themiso in which he imitated that of “the apostle” (*HE* 5.18.5). Hippolytus also criticizes the Montanists for “having infinite books” (ὧν βίβλους ἀπείρους ἔχοντες) from which they claim to have learned something more than what is found in the “Law, Prophets and Gospels” (*Ref.* 19.1-2). If Hippolytus’ testimony may be used as a comparison, then it is clear that the “new Scriptures” are set in contrast to those that were already accepted by the church – the Law, Prophets and the Gospels. Ps.-Tertullian states that Proclus believed that the Paraclete was not in the apostles, but chose to speak through Montanus “more things” than Christ had said in the Gospel, and not only more things, but also better and greater things (*Adv. omn. haer.* 7).

Gaius of Rome set out in his anti-Montanist work to distinguish “new scriptures” from those of the church, but as these examples indicate, this was not a new strategy. The question is whether John’s Gospel is included in this category,⁵¹¹ or are these “new scriptures” better understood as collections of Montanist oracles?⁵¹²

It would be strange for a “learned” and “ecclesiastical” man to be wholly unaware of the tradition associated with John’s Gospel that dates back as far as Papias. In addition to Eusebius’ record of Papias’ statements about John (*HE* 3.24.5-13), Polycrates (*HE* 5.24.2-7), Irenaeus (*AH* 3.1.1) and others (e.g. the “elders” in *AH* 2.22.5; cf. Polycarp at 3.3.4) speak of the Ephesian tradition that maintains John, who reclined on Jesus’ breast (Jn. 21:20), wrote this Gospel during his tenure in Asia.⁵¹³ This tradition was also well known to Gaius’ contemporaries scattered throughout the Mediterranean basin.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹⁰ See Campenhausen, 227, esp. n. 98, who also cites Tertullian (*Fuga* 9.4) and Epiphanius (*Haer.* 48) as further examples of Montanist writings. Powell argues that “Montanism was a literary movement” (50), citing *Fuga* 9 and *De resurr. carnis* 10 as examples of Tertullian’s citation of Montanist “scripture”.

⁵¹¹ So argues R.M. Grant, “Fourth Gospel,” 108.

⁵¹² Cf. Campenhausen, 227, n. 98: “Certainly, when we hear of the innumerable books of the Montanists, about which Hippolytus complains...we should think primarily of such collections of oracles.”

⁵¹³ There is no reason to believe the radical statement of J. J. Gunther, “The creation of a Johannine Asian myth started with Montanism.” *idem*, “Early Identifications,” 410.

⁵¹⁴ E.g. Clement of Alexandria “gives the tradition of the earliest presbyters as to the order of the Gospels” (*ap. HE* 6.14.5-7). So also Origen (*HE* 6.25.9-10; *Hom. Luc.* 1; *Comm. Jo.* 1.6), Hippolytus of Rome (*Dan.* 1.17) and Tertullian (*Adv. Marc.* 4.2, 5).

To claim that the Gospel of John was a recent production, a “new scripture”, would be a bizarre claim for Gaius to make. To state that it was a product of the heretic Cerinthus would be to demonstrate the most severe ignorance of tradition. Cerinthus’ dates preclude any work attributed to him as “recent”, and his teachings were entirely contrary to that found in John’s Gospel, most notably the pre-existent Logos and John’s Logos-Christology.⁵¹⁵ Also, the tradition about John’s opposition to Cerinthus makes any such claim severely problematic. The most obvious comes from Irenaeus (and later Epiphanius), who makes it plain that John wrote his Gospel to “remove the error of Cerinthus” (*AH* 3.11.1; cf. *Haer.* 51.4.1). Moreover, Polycarp’s account of John fleeing the baths because Cerinthus was there was well known (cf. *AH* 3.3.4). Eusebius relays this story a few sentences after noting Gaius’ accusation of Cerinthus’ claim to authorship of “revelations” that he “pretends were written by a great apostle” (*HE* 3.28.6, 4.14.6; Gaius at 3.28.2). This is significant for at the very moment Eusebius is writing this section against Cerinthus he has two books in front of him: Gaius’ *Dialogue* and Irenaeus’ *Against Heresies*.⁵¹⁶ He cites both verbatim and finds their contents worthy of inclusion in his condemnation of Cerinthus.

Now, either Gaius made that audacious claim that John’s Gospel ought to be rejected as new scripture written by Cerinthus and Eusebius fails to mention this or no such designation was made at all. Labriolle’s suggestion that Eusebius possessed an incomplete copy of Gaius’ *Dialogue* that was void of Gaius’ criticisms and attribution to Cerinthus is too hypothetical to be convincing.⁵¹⁷ The same is true for Grant’s view that Eusebius simply did not recite Gaius’ criticisms of John.⁵¹⁸ It is clear to Eusebius after reading Gaius’ *Dialogue* which books are not on Gaius’ bookshelf, and there is no reason to believe that the Gospel of John was not among them. If Gaius had wielded his pen to attack the Fourth Gospel because of its ties to

⁵¹⁵ Even Smith agrees that Gaius did not attribute John’s Gospel to Cerinthus (though he maintains Gaius still rejected it). See Smith, “Gaius”, 334.

⁵¹⁶ As well as Dionysius of Alexandria’s *On the Promises* (*HE* 3.28.3-5).

⁵¹⁷ Labriolle, *Crise*, 283-4, n. 6.

⁵¹⁸ Grant, “Fourth Gospel,” 109, n. 85. Elsewhere (*Eusebius as Church Historian*, 132), based on the bar Salibi evidence, he argues that Eusebius does recite Gaius’ criticisms of John in *HE* 3.24, but he does not mention Gaius’ name because, “It seems that he is already working toward a discussion of the Apocalypse, which Gaius also rejected. He [Eusebius] is planning to appeal to the authority of Gaius on the Apocalypse while rejecting his view on the Gospel. For this reason he certainly prefers to leave out Gaius’ name at this point.”

Montanism or its association with Cerinthus, it is safe to presume that Eusebius would have not only noticed this in Gaius' attack on Proclus but counteracted this view.

Furthermore, as Schwartz and Harnack⁵¹⁹ realized long ago, if Gaius did reject John's Gospel Eusebius would never have referred to Gaius as a "learned" and "ecclesiastical" man. Whatever ambivalence Eusebius may have felt towards John's Apocalypse, there was no doubt in his mind that John's Gospel was included in the canon. It is seen clearly in his introduction to the account of the origins of the Gospel of John. Eusebius praises the Gospel of John as "undisputed", which, along with Matthew's Gospel, was written by a disciple of the Lord (*HE* 3.24.2-5). At the end of his account he repeats the notice that not only John's Gospel but also his first Epistle were accepted without any argument, both now and long ago (*HE* 3.24.17). Indeed, the "holy quaternion of the Gospels" tops his list of "accepted books" (*HE* 3.25.1). In short, Eusebius' high estimation of John's Gospel on the one hand and Gaius of Rome on the other are totally incompatible if Gaius did, in fact, reject the Gospel of John.

To presume that Eusebius gave a pass to Gaius' supposedly negative views of John's Gospel is absurd. As noted earlier, Eusebius did not permit Origen's criticisms of John's Gospel to escape his own rebuttal (cf. *HE* 3.24.5-13), and Origen *accepted* the Gospel of John! It has been demonstrated that this criticism does not originate from Gaius, and it is also clear that Eusebius was not unaware of the origin of this criticism. The argument posed by Smith and others that Eusebius did not know the origins of this criticism is faulty, for Eusebius has read both Origen's *Commentary on John* and Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus*. In fact, he cites from Gaius' *Dialogue* shortly after his defense of Johannine-Synoptic compatibility (cf. *HE* 3.28.1-2; 3.31.4), without any indication that he was responding to Gaius.

The close proximity of his citations of Gaius' *Dialogue* with his account of the origins of the Fourth Gospel is not surprising, for throughout the third book of his *Historia Ecclesiastica* Eusebius is treading through the issue of canonical works, the very concern of Gaius' own work. Towards the beginning of Book III, Eusebius has plainly stated that as he presents his account of history he will be careful to show

⁵¹⁹ Harnack, *Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur*, 27.

what the ecclesiastical writers (ἐκκλησιαστικῶν συγγραφέων) think of disputed works as well as canonical (ἐνδιαθήκων) and accepted writings (ὁμολογουμένων; *HE* 3.3.3).

If he had read this criticism of John's Gospel in Gaius' *Dialogue*, Eusebius surely would have relayed a radically different opinion of the man whom he knows only through reading this work. However, the bonds of loyalty and esteem that he had for Origen were much stronger than any he had towards Gaius. Smith may be correct that Eusebius withholds specifying the source of this criticism in order to protect the identity of the accuser, but this reticence is best understood as a protective act on account of his fidelity to Origen, not Gaius of Rome.

Likewise, it has been demonstrated that Epiphanius' criticisms of the Gospel of John come from Origen. It is true that these objections are described as coming from a single individual (φησι – "he says"), but this does not inevitably point to Gaius, as Smith argues.⁵²⁰ Nowhere in Epiphanius' writings does he mention any knowledge of Gaius of Rome or a *Dialogue with Proclus*, nor does he mention Montanism as an issue in his account of the criticisms of John.

Indeed, *the only textual link between a person by the name of Gaius and a rejection of the Gospel of John is from a source that post-dates Gaius of Rome by a millennium*. Even here, the evidence is far from secure. As noted, the British manuscripts of bar Salibi's *Commentary on John* exclude Gaius' name from the original text. Thus, in regards to textual matters there is little reason to associate a rejection of John's Gospel with Gaius of Rome.⁵²¹

8.7 Gaius, Montanism and the Historical Context

Further corroboration that Gaius did not reject John's Gospel is found from an historical perspective, where on a number of fronts Gaius' anti-Montanism is incompatible with anti-Johannine views. Although it is generally accepted that the Montanists made much use of the Paraclete passages in John's Gospel to support their theology, it is far from certain that the earliest Montanists pointed to the

⁵²⁰ Smith, "Gaius", 233; so also Ladeuze, 54.

⁵²¹ The only link remains the notice provided in the preface to bar Salibi's *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, that Gaius rejected John's Gospel and Apocalypse. This will be discussed at length below.

Paraclete passages in the Gospel of John to substantiate their prophetic “gifts”.⁵²² Out of the paucity of the surviving evidence it is worth noting that Apollonius, the Anonymous and the eastern oracles do not use the term “Paraclete”.⁵²³ Nor do any of the extant prophetic utterances make any appeal to Scripture.⁵²⁴ Furthermore, R. E. Heine has argued that there is no evidence to suggest that Phrygian Montanists utilized the Paraclete passages in support of their “New Prophecy” in the second century.⁵²⁵

Such is the state of the evidence concerning the earliest years of the New Prophecy in the provenance of Asia Minor. But what about Rome at the beginning of the third century when Gaius was active? According to Heine, once Montanism moved to Rome the Gospel of John became “a point of contention between the opposing parties.”⁵²⁶ Yet the evidence does not fully support this view. He goes on to list the “meager” evidence to support this view: (i) Irenaeus’ notice (*AH* 3.11.9); (ii) Gaius’ *Dialogue with Proclus*; (iii) bar Salibi’s commentaries, which Heine argues to preserve statements from Gaius’ *Dialogue*; (iv) Hippolytus; (v) Ps.-Tertullian and (vi) the *Muratorian Canon*.⁵²⁷

Having examined the bulk of this evidence so far, it is clear that much of this brings little clarity to the role of the Gospel of John in the Montanist crisis at Rome. It is far from certain that Irenaeus’ notice (*AH* 3.11.9) refers directly to anti-Montanist views in the capitol city, nor is John’s Gospel that which is being rejected. It is the Paraclete and prophecy that is at the center of this antagonism, as is made

⁵²² See F.E. Vokes “The Use of Scripture in the Montanist Controversy,” *Studia Evangelica* 5 (1968): 317-320, where he makes a succinct and convincing case for exercising caution in presuming the use of the Fourth Gospel by early Montanists.

⁵²³ F.C. Klawiter, “The New Prophecy in Early Christianity; the Origin, Nature and Development of Montanism, A.D. 165-200.” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1975), 111, n. 1.

⁵²⁴ Campenhausen, *Formation*, 222.

⁵²⁵ R.E. Heine, “The Gospel of John and the Montanist Debate at Rome,” 95-100; eadem, “The Role of the Gospel of John in the Montanist Controversy,” 1-18. Cf. Campenhausen, *Formation*, 225, esp. n. 92. Smith (“Gaius,” 157-8) has to point to the fact that “Later evidence indicates that they [Montanists] must have made substantial use of the Fourth Gospel,” but he offers no early evidence to support such an assertion. Trevett disagrees with Heine, emphasizing that there was “an *assumed* relation between Christian prophecy and the presence of the Paraclete.” See Christine Trevett, *Montanism: Gender, Authority and the New Prophecy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 63.

⁵²⁶ Heine, “Gospel of John in the Montanist Controversy,” 11.

⁵²⁷ On the *Muratorian Fragment* as a rebuttal to Gaius of Rome, see Culpepper, *John*, 129; cf. Gunther, “Early Identifications,” 411-13.

clear when Irenaeus' other notice (*Dem.* 99) is considered.⁵²⁸ It has also just been demonstrated that Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus* did not contain a rejection or criticisms of John's Gospel; nor does bar Salibi indicate that he cites *this* work in his commentaries.⁵²⁹ Likewise there is little extant evidence from Hippolytus that supports Heine's position. When Hippolytus does speak of the Montanists there is nothing that indicates the Gospel of John was particularly at stake beyond the use of the term Paraclete (*Ref.* 19.1-2; also 10.25 which does not contain the word Paraclete). Ps.-Tertullian, not surprisingly, echoes Hippolytus' view that the Montanists claimed the Paraclete was not in the apostles, but in Montanus. However, Ps.-Tertullian states that the Montanist claim is not necessarily based on John's Gospel, but that the Paraclete's words *exceed* those of Christ in the Gospels – "not merely more, but likewise wiser and greater" (*Adv. omn. haer.* 7.2). Finally, the *Muratorian Fragment*, perhaps also from Hippolytus, makes no connection between Montanism and the Gospel of John. It does mention that the "number of prophets is complete", but this is immediately after a reference to the Shepherd of Hermas, not a Johannine work (lines 75-79). Furthermore, the *Fragment* makes no allusion to the criticisms of John that supposedly originated from Gaius. It does mention the general concern of "different beginnings" (*uaria...principia*)⁵³⁰ of the Gospels, but this "makes no difference to believers".⁵³¹

Thus, returning to Heine's argument, where does one find any explicit evidence that "the Gospel of John has become a point of contention between the opposing parties" in Rome? The problem with this calibration of the evidence is that Gaius of Rome is seen to be dominating both sides of the equation, creating a dizzying display of circular reasoning. It goes something like this: Gaius of Rome, in his endeavor to eradicate Montanism, rejected the Johannine literature, which goes to show that the New Prophecy's use of the Fourth Gospel created a backlash within the church to the degree that some rejected it, as in the case of Gaius of Rome, and so on. The issue with this equation, aside from its dubious logic, is that the evidence

⁵²⁸ See Chapter 4.2.

⁵²⁹ The following chapter will argue that Gaius' work against Proclus was not bar Salibi's source. Therefore I cannot agree with Heine's statement ("Gospel of John in the Montanist Controversy," 14), "It is but a small step to assume that Gaius' denial of the Johannine authorship of the Gospel was a part of his defense against Proclus."

⁵³⁰ See Chapter 6.3.

⁵³¹ See Chapter 3.3.

mounted thus far leads away from a secure pronouncement that Gaius rejected the Fourth Gospel at all, and there is no concrete evidence outside of Gaius' supposed denunciation of John to support Heine's position.

If Gaius did reject John's Gospel as a means of combating Montanism, it is a massive leap to conclude that such a position was normative of Roman sentiments at the time. As T. K. Seim notes, Heine's argument "depends on his reconstruction of an assumed Montanist counter-strategy to a certain line of critique in Rome and on an exclusive association of both Irenaeus and Tertullian with Rome – denouncing their connections with Asia Minor and knowledge about the situation there."⁵³² Moreover, even though there is a tragic lack of evidence relating to Montanism in Rome during the second and early third centuries, that which has survived bears very little indication of being colored in a predominantly anti-Johannine hue.⁵³³

As a matter of strategy, one may wonder why there would be such a pull for the anti-Montanists to reject John's Gospel as the primary means of dispelling this sect from the church. Although the third century Montanists such as Tertullian used John's Gospel, it was not their only Scriptural proof text.⁵³⁴ Moreover, Tertullian was in Carthage, not Rome. To banish John's Gospel as a means to eradicate the New Prophecy, then, would in itself not be the solution to the problem. If the idea was to take away this movement's textual foundations, Matthew would also be banished,⁵³⁵ Luke would have to go,⁵³⁶ so also would Paul's first letter to the Corinthians for, as Irenaeus argued, he too speaks of prophecy (*AH* 3.11.9; I Cor. 11:4-5). The rest of the Pauline corpus would also be clipped, for Trevett notes that Paul was a "very significant source" to the Montanists, and "both sides, catholic and Prophetic, were claiming the Pauline high ground."⁵³⁷ The Montanist appeal to prophetic succession that reaches back as far as the apostles places the Acts of the

⁵³² T.K. Seim, "Johannine Echoes in Early Montanism," in *The Legacy of John: Second-Century Reception of the Fourth Gospel*, ed. Tuomas Rasimus (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 353-4.

⁵³³ Cf. *ibid.*, 358. See also Brent, *Hippolytus*, 137-8.

⁵³⁴ *De virg. vel.* 1; cf. *De mon.* 2, 3. See Labriolle, *Sources*, 12-50.

⁵³⁵ Cf. the Anonymous (*ap. HE* 5.16.12) where the Montanists use Mt. 23:34 to identify their prophets and explain the ecclesiastical hostility to them.

⁵³⁶ Cf. Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* who appeals to Lk. 9:33 as an example of Peter not knowing what he said during the Transfiguration.

⁵³⁷ Trevett, *Montanism*, 130-1, who cites the "ardent Paulinist" Abercius Marcellus' encouragement of the Anonymous' anti-Montanist activities, and Tertullian's use of Paul on marriage, prophecy and the role of women in the churches (cf. *De monog.* 14.3).

Apostles next in the list of works to reject.⁵³⁸ These are just a few examples; the list goes on. Excising the possible proof texts for Montanism would be akin to a redaction of Scripture on a Marcionite scale; but this is not what happened.⁵³⁹

Rather, the evidence points to the fact that the methodology of the church was primarily twofold: (i) to distinguish the New Prophecy from that found in Scripture and the apostolic age, and (ii) to condemn the Montanist praxis. Concerning the first, this polemical methodology is seen in earliest opponents of Montanism in Asia,⁵⁴⁰ as well as during the time of Hippolytus in Rome (*Ref.* 8.19.2) and later.⁵⁴¹ Moreover, the desire of the church towards “testing the spirit” of the prophets, as Tabbernee notes, was nothing new in Asia Minor and can be derived from a Johannine injunction to “test the spirits to see whether they are from God” (I Jn. 4:1).⁵⁴² In two other passages that are likely directed against Montanism, at least in part, Hippolytus emphasizes that the “divine Scriptures” (αἱ θεῖαι γραφαί) are the basis for the entire discussion (*Dan.* 4.19.1, *Ant.* 1-2).⁵⁴³ Heine (along with Trevett) is surely correct in stating, “The Roman Church did not argue with the Montanists about true or false prophecy...It refused to grant the possibility of any prophecy after the apostles.”⁵⁴⁴ Likewise, Klawiter notes that Hippolytus believed genuine prophecy is found in

⁵³⁸ Cf. Miltiades (*ap.* *HE* 5.17.3-4). Also Acts 10:11-13 in Epiphanius (*Haer.* 48.7). See Heine, “Gospel of John in the Montanist Controversy,” 6, 9.

⁵³⁹ Contra Campenhausen who states that Gaius “seems to have been a spokesman for the extreme anti-Montanists. As such he was not content with rejecting the ‘new scriptures’ of the Montanists, but strove for a revision and reduction of the whole New Testament” (*Formation*, 237).

⁵⁴⁰ E.g. The Anonymous: “[Montanus] was prophesying in a manner contrary to the constant custom of the Church handed down by tradition from the beginning” (*HE* 5.16.7). Apollonius: “Does not all of Scripture prohibit a prophet to receive gifts and payment?” (*HE* 5.18.4). Also, Miltiades’ argument that the Montanists could not claim those prophets of the New Testament (Agabus [Acts 11:28; 21:10]; Judas and Silas [both at Acts 15:32]; and most notably the daughters of Philip [Acts 21:9], which Gaius of Rome also claimed for the side of orthodoxy [*HE* 3.31.3]). Cf. also *HE* 5.17.1.

⁵⁴¹ E.g. Epiphanius, *Haer.* 48.3.3; cf. 48.3.3-7.

⁵⁴² See Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 89-90. See also Epiphanius, *Haer.* 48.1.6-7.

⁵⁴³ Klawiter, 211-15. Klawiter (211) argues that while the New Prophecy is not mentioned by name in either of these passages, “It is reasonable to assume that Hippolytus’ conceptions were worked out with some conscious attention given to the positions held in the New Prophecy.” See also Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 75, Labriolle, *Crise*, 147-9; Brent, *Hippolytus*, 278.

⁵⁴⁴ Heine, “Gospel of John in the Montanist Controversy,” 15; Trevett, *Montanism*, 65. This may be seen in Hippolytus *Dan.* 4.38.1-2 as well as in the *Muratorian Fragment* where this work lists its reasons for excluding the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Yet even if the Roman Church in the third century were anti-prophecy, not just anti-Montanist, in no way does this necessarily mean that the Gospel of John was in peril.

“experiences [that were] gone and in the past. A Christian could do nothing better than to adhere to the deposit of that experience as found in holy scripture.”⁵⁴⁵

The second strategy is more straightforward. Condemnation of the Montanist practices comes from a number of early sources such as Eusebius’ Anonymous,⁵⁴⁶ Apollonius⁵⁴⁷ and Hippolytus.⁵⁴⁸ One could also detect a third strategy, which was simply to identify the Montanists as the emissaries of Satan.⁵⁴⁹

The one strategy attributed to Gaius that is reiterated time and again is not evidenced anywhere prior to the twelfth century writings of Dionysius bar Salibi, and it is interesting that even bar Salibi does not make a connection between a rejection of John and efforts to abolish Montanism. In fact there is no explicit evidence anywhere to suggest that the church chose to cede the Johannine corpus to the Montanists. On the contrary, later heresiologists used John’s Gospel as a weapon against the Montanists. Epiphanius pits John’s Gospel (5:43) against the words of Montanus to show that his teachings are in total disagreement with the sacred Scriptures, as is evident to anyone paying attention (*Haer.* 48.11.4; cf. Jn. 7:37 at 48.13.5). The “spirit” behind the Montanist prophecy was not the Johannine Paraclete, but an evil spirit (*Haer.* 48.1.4-7, 48.2.23, 48.4.4).⁵⁵⁰ Furthermore, in combating the Montanist appeal to the Gospel of John, Jerome, in a letter to Marcella, does not criticize John’s Gospel, nor is he aware of any historical precedent for such a position. Rather, he demonstrates that it is to be interpreted in light of other Scripture, namely the Acts of the Apostles (*Ep.* 41).

⁵⁴⁵ Klawiter, 213, who bases his position on reading *Ant.* 2. See also Laura Nasrallah, “An Ecstasy of Folly”: *Prophecy and Authority in Early Christianity*. *Harvard Theological Studies* 52 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), 174.

⁵⁴⁶ *HE* 5.16.9 against the Montanist understanding of the role of women (so also Hippolytus, *Ref.* 8.19.2).

⁵⁴⁷ *HE* 5.18.2 against (i) the claim that Pepuza (and Tymion) would be the site of the “new Jerusalem”, (ii) their illegitimate practice of prophets requesting money, and (iii) other unseemly economic practices.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ref.* 8.19.2 against their “novelties” of fasts (νηστείας), feasts (ἐορταί), eating dried food (ξηροφαγίας), and eating radishes (ῥαφανοφαγίας); also *Dan.* 4.20.3 appears to be directed against the Montanists’ fasting on the Sabbath, which Christ did not sanction. Cf. Labriolle, *Sources*, 12.

⁵⁴⁹ E.g. the Anonymous (*ap.* *HE* 5.16.7, 9); Hippolytus (*Dan.* 4.20). This went both ways, however, such as Tertullian’s notice, “Praxeas provided a double service for the devil at Rome – he drove away prophecy and brought in heresy; he put to flight the Paraclete and crucified the Father” (*Adv. Prax.* 1). Tabbernee (*Fake Prophecy*, 87-124) divides ecclesiastical charges against Montanism into three categories: (i) Pseudo-Prophecy, (ii) Novelties, such as their “new scriptures” and more rigoristic novelties such as fasting, “Judaizing”, etc., and (iii) Heresy.

⁵⁵⁰ See Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 88.

The difference in hermeneutics, therefore, is the primary issue. On this note, Allen Brent makes an insightful point, although he may be painting with too broad a brush. He states that despite the trend in modern exegesis to see John's promise of the Paraclete as directly supporting Montanism, in the late second and early third century, Jn. 20 was interpreted as "limiting the charisma of the Spirit within the ordered, presbyteral/episcopal succession. The consequence of such an exegesis was that there was no need to attack the Fourth Gospel as opposed to simply reclaiming it from the Montanists who had allegedly distorted it."⁵⁵¹ One may detect a similar trend in the writings of Irenaeus against the Gnostic use of John. In terms of the canon, the only visible difficulty found in the evidence concerned the unique Montanist writings that they claimed to be authoritative. The Gospel of John, however, is conspicuously absent in this debate.

The evidence considered in the question regarding Gaius' rejection of the Gospel of John has pointed away from the standard view. There is nothing in the testimony of Gaius himself or Eusebius' knowledge of his anti-Montanist work against Proclus to indicate that Gaius harbored any negative feelings towards John's Gospel. Furthermore, no other early writer up to the time of Epiphanius mentions anything about a formal rejection of John's Gospel. Indeed, there are a number of scholars have agreed and expressed doubts that Gaius of Rome rejected John's Gospel.⁵⁵² Even if he *did*, this does not necessarily imply a full-blown "Johannine Controversy". Here it is worthwhile remembering the words recorded long ago by Theodore Zahn, brought back into light by Martin Hengel. Zahn observes that Gaius, "in declaring that the Johannine writings were unworthy to be in the church, acknowledged that they were in fact recognized in the church, and in attributing their authorship to Cerinthus, a contemporary of John, acknowledged that they were written in John's lifetime."⁵⁵³

Thus, the early evidence does not support the view of Gaius as the ecclesiastical leader who fought to eradicate the Johannine literature because of its

⁵⁵¹ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 138.

⁵⁵² E.g. Harnack, *Das Neue Testament*, 63-5; Schwartz's later article, "Johannes und Kerinthos," 212-13; Schmidt, 436, 444-5; Stanton, 239-43; Brent, *Hippolytus*, 148.

⁵⁵³ Theodore Zahn, "Aloger," in *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Alterthumswissenschaft* 3, 1 (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1896): 386-8, 387, cited in Hengel, *Johannine Question*, 6. Cf. Stanton, 240-3.

ties to heresy. After the analysis of Smith, Gaius has become synonymous with the *Alogi*, but ironically, Smith's argument may work against the larger point he is trying to make. When he states that Gaius alone constitutes the so-called *Alogi* and that all the evidence of criticisms of the Johannine literature and denial of their apostolic authorship can be traced back to Gaius of Rome and to no other person or group,⁵⁵⁴ he actually demonstrates that the anti-Johannine sentiments that were supposedly rampant throughout the Roman church at the beginning of the third century were actually quite limited in scope. Thus, Gaius would have been very much alone in his purported anti-Johannine sentiments, but as I have demonstrated, this was not the case. Rather, when examined carefully, the Gaian Paradox is unsustainable and his connection to the *Alogi* untenable. The later sources that paint Gaius in a heterodox light do not comport with the earlier evidence of Gaius of Rome. Given the conflicting reports about him, there is no solid evidence to connect the *Caius haereticus* of the bar Salibi commentaries with Gaius of Rome. Thus, Lightfoot's premonition that a distinction may be drawn between Gaius of bar Salibi lore and the "ecclesiastical" and "learned" Gaius of Rome has been proven valid.

The *only* evidence to support Gaius' rejection of the Johannine literature comes from the later Syrian sources. In the following chapter, it will become even more apparent that bar Salibi's notice of *Caius haereticus* is the product of his own misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the early evidence.

⁵⁵⁴ Smith, "Gaius," 426-7.

CHAPTER NINE

The Syrian Evidence: Dionysius bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a careful examination of the later Syrian evidence to better understand the deep influence these testimonies have had on defining the nature, background and origins of the criticisms of the Johannine literature and their potential relationship to the Epiphanius' testimony – particularly in the identification of Gaius as the true identity of the *Alogi*. Given the complex nature of the evidence, I shall provide a full catalogue of the relevant sources. After this, I shall address recent scholarship on the bar Salibi commentaries before providing a full analysis of this later Syrian evidence, beginning with Ebed-Jesu's *Catalogue*, then looking at the bar Salibi texts themselves.

9.1 The Syrian Evidence: Dionysius bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu

John Gwynn

From bar Salibi's *Commentary on the Apocalypse and Catholic Epistles*, John Gwynn first noted five objections to John's Apocalypse that originated from a certain Caius.⁵⁵⁵

I. *Gaius' objection to Rev. 8:8, concerning the notice that a great mountain will be cast into the sea and a third of the sea became blood.*

“On this, Caius the heretic objected to this revelation, and said that it is not possible that these things should be, inasmuch as, ‘*as a thief that cometh in the night, so is the coming of the Lord*’ (1 Thess. 5:2).”⁵⁵⁶

II. *Gaius' objection to Rev. 8:12, concerning the notice that the third part of the sun was darkened, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars.*

“On this Caius said that, Just as in the Flood the heavenly bodies were not taken away and suddenly submerged, thus also is it to be in the end,

⁵⁵⁵ The list of Gaius' objections and Hippolytus' rejoinders is found in Gwynn, pp. 399-404.

⁵⁵⁶ *Comm. Apoc.*, 8; cf. Gwynn, 399. *Caius haereticus impugnavit hanc visionem et dixit: Impossibile est, ut ista fiant, nam, «sicut fur, qui venit noctu», ita erit adventus Domini.*

as it is written (Mt. 24:37); and Paul says, *When they shall say, Peace and safety, destruction shall come upon them* (I Thess. 5:3).”⁵⁵⁷

III. *Gaius’ objection to Rev. 9:2-3, concerning the notice that locusts came out of the smoke and were given power like the power of scorpions on the earth.*

“Here Caius objects, how will the unrighteous be consumed by the locusts, when Scripture says that *sinner prosper* and the righteous are persecuted, *in the world* (Ps. 73:12); and Paul, that the faithful *shall be persecuted and the evil shall flourish, being deceived and deceiving* (II Tim. 3:12-13)?”⁵⁵⁸

IV. *Gaius’ objection to Rev. 9:15, concerning the angels, which are loosed to slay a third of mankind.*

“On this Caius says: It is not written that angels are to make war, nor that a third part of men is to perish; but that *nation shall rise against nation* (Mt. 24:7).”⁵⁵⁹

V. *Gaius’ objection to Rev. 20:2-3, concerning the notice that Satan will be bound for a thousand years.*

“On this Caius the heretic objects: that Satan is bound here, according to that which is written, that Christ *Went into the strong man’s house and bound him, and seized us who were his goods* (Mt. 12:29).”⁵⁶⁰

Such is the evidence provided by Gwynn. Shortly after Gwynn’s publication, J. Rendell Harris and T. H. Robinson provided additional bar Salibi materials that suggested Gaius rejected the Gospel of John as well as the Apocalypse. Harris discovered some manuscripts of the bar Salibi commentary on the Gospel of John, while Robinson stumbled upon a separate copy of bar Salibi’s commentary on the

⁵⁵⁷ *Comm. Apoc.*, 9; cf. Gwynn, 400. *Caius dixit: Sicut in diluvio elementa non sublevata sunt, et subito aquis submersa sunt, ita etiam in fine erit, sicut scriptum est; et Paulus: «cum dicent: Salus est et securitas, surget in eos interitus».*

⁵⁵⁸ *Comm. Apoc.* 10; cf. Gwynn, 401. *hic obiicit Caius: Quomodo scelesti percutientur locustis, cum dicat Scriptura peccatores prosperaturos et iustos persecutioni obnoxios fore in mundo; et Paulus: «Fideles persecutionem patientur et mali prospere agent, errantes et decipientes»?*

⁵⁵⁹ *Comm. Apoc.* 10; cf. Gwynn, 402. *Caius (dicit): Non est scriptum angelos bellum gessuros esse, nec tertiam partem hominum perituram esse, sed: «Surget gens contra gentem».*

⁵⁶⁰ *Comm. Apoc.* 19; cf. Gwynn, 402-3. *Caius haereticus obiicit: Satanus hic vinctus est secundum quod scriptum est: «Ingressus est Christus domum fortis et ligavit eum et rapuit nos, vasa eius».*

Apocalypse that contained a portion of the prologue that was missing from Gwynn's copy of the same work. Their contributions are provided below.

J. Rendell Harris

J. Rendell Harris provided the following extract of a Latin translation of bar Salibi's commentary on the Gospel of John made by Dudley Loftus:

*"Gaius haereticus reprehendat Johannem quia non concors fuit cum sociis, dicentibus, quod post baptismum abiit in Galilaeam, et fecit miraculum vini in Katna. Sanctus Hypolitus e contrario (l. adversus eum) scilicet..."*⁵⁶¹

Harris noted a significant corruption in the manuscript tradition, however. After reviewing two manuscripts of the same work, housed in the British Library (MSS Codd. Add. 7184 and 12,143), Harris suspected that "the name of Gaius was not in the primitive draft of the Commentary."⁵⁶² In MS. Add. 7184 the text reads: "A certain heretic had accused John..." above which a later hand prescribed the name Gaius. The second British manuscript (MS. Add. 12,143) contains the same objection but with no mention of the name "Gaius" at all. In the words of Harris, "as we can see no reason for the omission of the name of Gaius in these two copies, we suspect that it has come in by editorial correction. Indeed the opening words which answer to the Greek αἱρετικός τις would of themselves suggest the absence of the name of the heretic."⁵⁶³ However, given that this anonymous objection is followed by a rebuttal by Hippolytus, as in the case of the objections to the Apocalypse, Harris maintained Gaius' name was rightly added by a later source for the sake of identification.

⁵⁶¹ Harris, 48. See Harris (48) for the full reproduction of Hippolytus' response in the Latin. My English translation of the portion quoted above reads: "A heretic Gaius rebukes John because he was not in agreement with his companions, since after the baptism he went into Galilee, and made the miracle of wine in Cana. Saint Hippolytus said against him..." Harris located this Latin translation by Dudley Loftus in the Bodleian Library, *Fell MSS.* 6 and 7, which Loftus translated from the Syriac MS listed in the Manuscripts Department of Trinity College Library, Dublin as: TCD MS 1512 fol. Chart., s.xii. Syriac – Dionysius (Jacob) Barsalibi; *Commentarius in Quator Evangelia. Written by Matthew, son of John, for his nephew Matthew, son of Bakhiitujar, A. Gr. 1509; AD 1198.*

⁵⁶² Harris, 48.

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, 48-9.

T. H. Robinson contributed the final piece of evidence from the preface to bar Salibi's commentary on Revelation. It will serve the present inquiry well to reproduce a lengthy portion:

...At the beginning of the treatise we must say that there are many teachers who are in doubt regarding the Revelation of John, and say that it is not his. And Eusebius of Caesarea declares the same thing in his ecclesiastical writings. For Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, says that the Revelation was not that of John the Apostle, but of another John, 'the Presbyter,' who lived in Asia. The reason is, that the style of the Revelation is not like the type of the language of the Gospel. Also John makes no mention of his name at all in the Gospel, but does put his name at the beginning and end of the Revelation. Now we agree that he received the Revelation of which he wrote from our Lord. Irenaeus the bishop, and Hippolytus of Bozra say that the Revelation is that of John the Evangelist, and that it was granted about the end of the reign of Domitian. And Eusebius of Caesarea agrees with this, but immediately says that some do not accept it as being the Revelation of John the Apostle, so saying that it is the work of John the Elder, who was a contemporary of John the Apostle. And there are two tombs in Asia, one being that of the Evangelist, the other that of John the Elder.

Hippolytus of Rome states that a man named Gaius had appeared, who said that neither the Gospel nor yet the Revelation was John's; but that they were the work of Cerinthus the heretic. And the blessed Hippolytus opposed this Gaius, and showed that the teaching of John in the Gospel and Revelation was different from that of Cerinthus. This Cerinthus was one who taught circumcision, and was angry with Paul when he did not circumcise Titus, and the Apostle calls him and his disciples in one of his letters 'sham apostles, crafty workers.' Again he teaches that the world was created by angels, and that our Lord was not born of a virgin. He also teaches carnal eating and drinking, and many other blasphemies. The Gospel and Revelation of John, however, are like the teaching which the Scriptures contain; and so they are liars who say that the Revelation is not by the Apostle John. And we agree with Hippolytus that the Revelation is the Evangelist John's. This is attested by S. Cyril and Mar Severus, and all the teachers who bring evidence from it. Also the Theologian,⁵⁶⁴ in his 'Address to the Nation,' testifies that there is no proof from the conclusion, and says, 'as John taught me by his Revelation; He made a way for thy people, and these stones' – where he calls the heretics and their teaching stones.⁵⁶⁵

Pierre de Labriolle

Thanks to the contributing work of M. Chabot towards the critical editions of the bar Salibi commentaries, Pierre de Labriolle was made aware of another copy of bar Salibi's commentary on the Gospels in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. This manuscript (*Cod. parisinus syr.* 67) contains the name "Gaius" as part of the original text. Labriolle cites it in this way:

⁵⁶⁴ Here Robinson understands this person as Gregory of Nazianzus.

⁵⁶⁵ Robinson, 487. Latin translation in Sedlacek (ed.), *Comm. Apoc.* 1-2.

«*Caius hareticus arguebat Iohannem* quod non consentiret Evangelistis eius sociis qui dicunt (*sic*) quod post baptismum iuit in Galileam et fecit Canae miraculum uini». ⁵⁶⁶

It is readily apparent that another textual issue arises, though not pertaining to the inclusion of Gaius' name. The translation of this manuscript reads incoherently:

“*Gaius the heretic accused John* because it does not agree with the other Evangelists who say (pl.) that after the baptism he came into Galilee and made the miracle of the wine in Cana.” ⁵⁶⁷

In fact this is the Johannine chronology, not that of the Synoptics as is indicated in this passage. Labriolle suggested the original reading must have read, «...dicunt quod post baptismum iuit <in desertum, dum ipse dicit quod statim iuit> in Galileam, etc...» ⁵⁶⁸

Labriolle also noted that another copy of the bar Salibi commentary (*Cod. Paris. syr.* 68) neglected to include the objection of Gaius altogether. Finally, he also speaks of a relatively recent copy (1904) of a seventeenth-century manuscript that provides a text analogous to that of *Cod. parisinus syr.* 67, which includes Gaius' name.

The Catalogue of Ebed-Jesu

Finally it is necessary to consider Ebed-Jesu's Syriac *Catalogue* (ca. 1300). The seventh chapter of the Syriac *Catalogue* lists a number of works by “Hippolytus, bishop and martyr” (*Hippolytus Epifcopus & Martyr*). It has been translated into Greek by Lightfoot and into Latin by Assemani. ⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁶ Labriolle, *Crise*, 285, citing *Cod. parisinus syr.* 67 Fol. 270, r°, col. 2. Not surprisingly, Smith based his translation on this manuscript due to its inclusion of Gaius' name. See Smith, “Gaius”, 201, n. 2.

⁵⁶⁷ My translation.

⁵⁶⁸ Labriolle, *Crise*, 285, n. 1

⁵⁶⁹ Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, i, 2, 350; Assemanus, *BO* III, i, 15.

<u>Lightfoot Translation</u>	<u>Assemani Translation</u>
Κύριος Ἰππόλυτος μάρτυς	1 <i>Sanctus Hippolytus martyr</i>
καὶ ἐπίσκοπος ἔγραψε βιβλίον	2 <i>Et Episcopus composuit librum</i>
περὶ οἰκονομίας καὶ ἐρμηνείαν	<i>De Dispensatione: & expositionem</i>
Δανιήλ τοῦ μικροῦ καὶ Σουσάννας	3 <i>Danielis minoris & Susannae</i>
καὶ κεφάλαια κατὰ Γαΐου	4 <i>Et capita adversus Cajum :</i>
καὶ ἀπολογία ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀποκαλύ- ψεως	5 <i>Et Apologiam pro Apocalypsi</i>
καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰωάννου [sic]	<i>Et Evangelio Joannis</i>
τοῦ ἀποστόλου καὶ εὐαγγελιστοῦ.	<i>Apostoli & Evangelistae</i>

For over a century this Syrian evidence remained largely unchallenged. The most notable attempt at proving its integrity came from a series of articles published by Pierre Prigent. After Prigent's analysis the authenticity of the Syrian evidence appeared to have been granted a certain degree of reliability. Such was the case until the recent work of Allen Brent, who has directly challenged these findings and questioned the authority of this later evidence. Thus, I shall now address these significant contributions of recent scholarship.

9.2 Recent Scholarship on Bar Salibi's Sources

Bar Salibi never identifies the source of his information on the exchange between Gaius and Hippolytus of Rome. In light of the evidence from Ebed-Jesu's *Catalogue* and the statue of Hippolytus, it is generally assumed that bar Salibi utilized a copy of Hippolytus' lost work *Heads against Gaius*, which many have identified as the *Apology for the Gospel and Apocalypse of John*. The strongest contribution to prove this came from a series of articles published by Pierre Prigent.

Pierre Prigent

Shortly before Smith completed his PhD dissertation, Pierre Prigent began the task of identifying bar Salibi's use of Hippolytus throughout his *Commentary on the Apocalypse*.⁵⁷⁰ Whereas Smith took for granted the fact that bar Salibi used a lost Hippolytan work for his source, Prigent set out to establish this position factually through textual analysis of Hippolytan works and bar Salibi's *Commentary*.⁵⁷¹ Smith, however, was unaware of this important contribution that would have greatly benefitted his overall argument.

Prigent's overall aim was to confirm the integrity of Hippolytus' citations against Gaius by demonstrating Hippolytan influence on the entirety of bar Salibi's *Commentary on the Apocalypse*. By establishing the Hippolytan character of other portions of bar Salibi's *Commentary*, Prigent would be in a position to argue that the citations that the Syrian exegete attributes to Hippolytus are genuine as well.⁵⁷² Yet

⁵⁷⁰ See Pierre Prigent, "Hippolyte, Commentateur de l'Apocalypse," *TZ* 28 (1972), 391-412; Prigent and R. Stehly, "Les Fragments du De Apocalypsi d'Hippolyte," *TZ* 29 (1973), 313-333; Prigent and R. Stehly, "Citations d'Hippolyte trouvée dans le ms. Bodl. Syr 140," *TZ* 30 (1974), 82-85.

⁵⁷¹ Prigent concurred with Harris' notion that the marginal note indicated that "Gaius" was the heretic in question. He also offered two additional fragments from bar Salibi's commentary on Revelation that were discovered subsequent to the publication of the CSCO edition edited by I. Sedlacek, which he argued are from the putative work, *Heads against Gaius*. The first additional bar Salibi fragment from Prigent comes from the prologue of his commentary and is very similar to that of Robinson's discovery. See Fragment 00 (Prigent, "Hippolyte," 407) where he highlights the likelihood that the first fragment (00) is "precisely the character of the work of Hippolytus that one could well qualify as an *Apology* of the Gospel and Apocalypse of John in response to the allegations of Gaius." The second fragment (01), from bar Salibi's commentary on Rev. 1:4, "must come from the same work of Hippolytus." See *ibid*, 408. This fragment is provided by Prigent as: «Hippolyte dit: 'Quand il a écrit, il a écrit à sept églises, comme Paul qui a écrit ses treize lettres à sept églises.' Celle aux Hébreux, il ne reconnaît pas qu'elle est de Paul, mais de Clément peut-être.» Cf. Nautin, *Dossier*, 145; *Comm. Apoc.*, 2-3.

⁵⁷² "De nombreux passages du commentaire sont en réalité des extraits d'oeuvres hippolytiennes bien que rien ne vienne signaler leur origine. De plus certaines interprétations sont indéniablement

as Gwynn and P. Nautin noted, the delimitation of Hippolytus' quotes by bar Salibi is not without difficulty, since it appears the latter has summarized the words of the former rather than provide actual citations.⁵⁷³

With this in mind, Prigent first traced what he maintained are concrete links between portions of bar Salibi's *Commentary on the Apocalypse* with extant Hippolytan texts, namely *On the Antichrist (Ant.)* and the *Commentary on Daniel (Dan.)*.⁵⁷⁴ Prigent also considered another possible Hippolytan source for bar Salibi's commentary, the work entitled *De Apocalypsi* mentioned by Jerome (*De vir. ill.* 61) and his successors (Sophronius, Nicephorus Callistus and George Syncellus). In 1897 H. Achelis had published twenty-two Hippolytan fragments that he attributed to this lost work.⁵⁷⁵ But Prigent argued that *De Apocalypsi* was simply a fictitious work presumed to exist by these various writers throughout Christian history.⁵⁷⁶ According to Prigent's analysis *De Apocalypsi* is a spurious title given to what is actually a florilegium of *Dan.* and *Ant.* in conjunction with what he argues is the authentic, lost Hippolytan *Apology*, which Prigent argued to be identical to the work Ebed-Jesu listed as *Heads against Gaius*.⁵⁷⁷ According to Prigent, the *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu has "only relative value" and one should not distinguish between these two works.⁵⁷⁸

This raises a crucial question. Did the citations that bar Salibi attributes to Gaius and Hippolytus really come from a distinct work (*Heads against Gaius*), or did bar Salibi derive these from a florilegium as well? In other words, is it possible that the *Heads against Gaius* is not a distinct work but part of this catena tradition?

marquees au coin de l'exégèse hippolytienne. Il faudra donc élargir la question et poser le problème de la composition du commentaire de Denys: Doit-on y déceler les traces du *De Apocalypsi* d'Hippolyte?" Ibid, 392. Cf. Brent, *Hippolytus*, 150.

⁵⁷³ Gwynn, 404; Nautin, *Dossier*, 146.

⁵⁷⁴ Prigent, "Hippolyte," 392ff.

⁵⁷⁵ Achelis used quotations from the translation by R. Payne Smith of *MS. Bodl. Syr.* 140 as well as *MS. Parisinus arab.* 67. H. Achelis, *Hippolytus Werke* Band 1, 2 *Hippolyt's kleinere exegetische und homiletische Schriften*, GCS (1897), 231-238. See also J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte des Griechischen Apokalypse-Textes*. 1. *Der Apokalypse-Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia* (München: K. Zink, 1955-1956).

⁵⁷⁶ Prigent, "Hippolyte," 395-403.

⁵⁷⁷ Prigent and Stehly, "Citations," 84-5; *idem*, "Les fragments," 333; 316.

⁵⁷⁸ Prigent, "Hippolyte," 411-412; cf. Nautin, 146-147: "On s'abstiendra donc désormais de considérer les «chapitres contre Caïus» comme un ouvrage distinct de l'*Apologie de l'Apocalypse et de l'Évangile de Jean*."

Prigent considered this possibility, but quickly rejected it, arguing that the citations of Hippolytus against Gaius are genuine and derive from this lost work because they have “precisely the character of an apologetic work”.⁵⁷⁹ He therefore bet on the veracity of the notices of the existence of the *Apology* found in the *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu and the Statue over against the testimonies of Jerome and others that speak of the authenticity of the work *De Apocalypsi*.⁵⁸⁰

To prove the authenticity of Hippolytus’ polemic against Gaius in the bar Salibi commentary, Prigent pointed to two extant fragments that he believed were derived from the lost *Heads against Gaius*, but which Achelis wrongly categorized under the title *De Apocalypsi*.⁵⁸¹ Achelis lists Frag. II as a commentary on Rev. 10:2-4, but as Prigent notes it is more likely a reference to Rev. 7:9-17.⁵⁸² The context of this passage regards the tribulation (cf. Mt. 24:21). Prigent argued that this fragment shows a degree of a polemical context, and he suggests that it fits with bar Salibi’s record of Hippolytus’ statements on Rev. 11:2, where he discusses this Matthean verse as well.

The other Achelis fragment that Prigent examined is Frag. IX on Rev. 12:16.⁵⁸³ The context of this passage is that of the woman and the dragon (Satan), where the earth aids the woman in her flight from the dragon. In this Arabic fragment, two interpretations are given: one literal, one symbolic. The author of the fragment only attributes the latter to Hippolytus, but Prigent believed both belong to him. Prigent argued that these interpretations represent exegesis that is characteristic

⁵⁷⁹ Prigent, “Hippolyte,” 407, 411-12.

⁵⁸⁰ “On ne retiendra du témoignage de Denys (et d’Ebed Jesu) qu’une seule chose: Hippolyte a écrit, en répondant à Caius, une *Apologie de l’Apocalypse et de l’Evangile de Jean*.” Prigent, “Hippolyte, commentateur de l’Apocalypse,” 412.

⁵⁸¹ Achelis, *Hippolyt’s Kleinere Exegetische und Homiletische Schriften*, GCS (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1897), 232-8.

⁵⁸² Prigent, “Les Fragments,” 321; cf. Brent, *Hippolytus*, 158.

⁵⁸³ Achelis, 233 (esp. lines 11-13): “Wenn es heisst: ‘Und die Erde öffnete ihren Mund, und verschlang den Wasserstrom, welchen der Drache dem Weibe nachwarf’, so lässt das, dass die Erde die ausgesandten Heere verschlang, zwei Deutungen zu. Die eine ist die äusserliche, so dass es ihnen ergangen wäre wie einst den Korachiten, als die Erde sich aufthat, und sie in ihre Tiefen stürzten, und sie sie zudeckte. Und die andere ist, dass man so erklärt, dass das ‘sie verschlang dieselben’ so viel ist als: sie (die Heere) irrten auf ihr umher und kamen von ihrem Marschziel ab. Diese (letzttere) hat Hippolytus.”

of an *Apology*, and that there are parallels with bar Salibi's citations of Hippolytus' refutations of Gaius elsewhere.⁵⁸⁴

However, Prigent recognized that there were some difficulties with his argument for bar Salibi's dependence upon the lost *Heads against Gaius*. He noticed that some of bar Salibi's statements have strong affinities to what is actually found in Irenaeus. But these, he argued, must have been relayed through Hippolytus as intermediary.⁵⁸⁵ Other portions of bar Salibi's commentary on Revelation had no parallel with any extant Hippolytan work at all. He nevertheless maintained his argument that those fragments that bar Salibi directly attributes to Hippolytus must be authentic since Hippolytan influence was seen elsewhere, and since these responses to Gaius have precisely the character of an *Apology*, they must have derived from this lost Hippolytan work.⁵⁸⁶ Prigent thus concluded that bar Salibi's *Commentary on the Apocalypse* is composed partially from quotations derived from *Ant.*, what appears to be a citation from *Dan*, and the rest – more than two-thirds of bar Salibi's statements – come from Hippolytus' lost *Apology* of the Gospel and Apocalypse of John in response to Gaius.⁵⁸⁷

Prigent's case for the authenticity of the Hippolytan fragments in the bar Salibi commentaries is compelling, but is his analysis correct? If it is, then bar Salibi is the lone witness to explicitly record anything from the lost work of Hippolytus against Gaius. Furthermore, given the similar criticism against the Apocalypse of John along with another against John's Gospel in the writings of bar Salibi and Epiphanius, it could be possible to forge a direct textual link between bar Salibi's Gaius and Epiphanius' *Alogi*. In other words, it would appear that Prigent had proven Smith's argument that both Epiphanius and bar Salibi were dependent upon the same Hippolytan source. However, a recent study by Allen Brent may have overturned much of what Prigent sought to establish.

Allen Brent

⁵⁸⁴ Prigent, "Les Fragments," 325. He finds parallels with Rev. 8:8 on the plagues of Egypt, Rev. 8:11 on the miracle of Mara, Rev. 8:12 on the Flood as a prophecy of the last things.

⁵⁸⁵ Prigent, "Hippolyte", 404-7, 411.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 407.

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 411.

Allen Brent has examined Prigent's analysis and conclusions and determined that Hippolytus' influence throughout bar Salibi's *Commentary* may not be as strong as Prigent maintained. The primary target of Brent's counter argument is Prigent's unfounded suppositions that the lost *De Apocalypsi* was a florilegium, but that the *Apology*, which comprised part of that florilegium, was itself genuine, and the source of bar Salibi's quotations of Hippolytus against Gaius.⁵⁸⁸

Brent agrees with Prigent that many of bar Salibi's citations derive from known works (namely *Dan.* and *Ant.*), and sometimes they have been "garbled and distorted" to the extent that they are ultimately derived from a florilegium of Hippolytan apocalyptic writings.⁵⁸⁹ Thus, Brent finds common ground with Prigent in that the *De Apocalypsi* may not be genuine at all. But given the dates of the manuscripts examined by Prigent, bar Salibi would have had access to a similar florilegium of Hippolytan writings, in which case bar Salibi could have used Hippolytus' works (*Dan.* and *Ant.*) directly in some instances, but in others it is possible that bar Salibi may reflect "the garbled hermeneutic represented by such *florilegia*."⁵⁹⁰ Therefore, there is no reason to assume with Prigent that the *Heads against Gaius* was an authentic component part of the same florilegium of Hippolytan extracts.⁵⁹¹

As noted above, Prigent argued that two of Achelis' fragments must have come from the lost *Apology* from Hippolytus. The first of these is Frag. II. But the content of this fragment does not actually square with the passage in bar Salibi. In the Arabic fragment listed by Achelis, Hippolytus claims that the prophecy applies to the general resurrection and not to the Maccabees.⁵⁹² In bar Salibi, Hippolytus

⁵⁸⁸ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 151. Brent finds it "interesting...to consider precisely why [Prigent] held the *De Apocalypsi* to be a spurious construction, and yet held that the κεφάλαια [=Apology] were genuine even if they came down to us themselves via such a *florilegium*."

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., 159, see esp. n. 158.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., 161.

⁵⁹¹ "But Prigent insisted nevertheless that the κεφάλαια is genuine and not itself the product of a similar process of literary transmission [as *De Apocalypsi*]. We need to ask whether in that case Prigent may be wrong in concluding that sometimes Barsalibi is quoting from these two works as part of his own commentary, but in other parts, those directed at Gaius, from the κεφάλαια as a genuine work. The κεφάλαια may well be the product of such secondary material whose garbled character has produced, as in the case of the putative *De Apocalypsi*, the illusion of being citations from a genuine lost work." Brent, *Hippolytus*, 161.

⁵⁹² Achelis, 230: [Fragment] II. Apok. Joh. 10, 1-7. Hippolytus, der römische Bischof, tritt der Ansicht bei, dass die erwähnte Weissagung auf diejenigen toten, die auferstehen, gehe, und nicht auf die Makkabäer.

argues that Mt. 24:21 rejects the application of this verse to the taking of Jerusalem by Vespasian.⁵⁹³ Moreover, no objection to this verse by Gaius or anyone else is noted in bar Salibi's *Commentary*.

Furthermore, Brent finds Prigent's argument for second fragment (Frag. IX) as part of the *Heads against Gaius* "particularly weak".⁵⁹⁴ The parallels that Prigent sought to draw between this fragment and Hippolytus' refutations of Gaius are not unique. Rather, Brent notes that they "are too common to apocalyptic hermeneutic in general to yield any specific parallel."⁵⁹⁵ Thus, Brent argues, these two fragments do not prove the existence of an authentic work (*Heads*) as part of the florilegium.

Upon reading the summary statements at the beginning of his *Commentary on the Apocalypse* it is a fair inference that bar Salibi paints the dispute between Gaius and Hippolytus as having been derived from a work in which Hippolytus was the author.⁵⁹⁶ So far in this examination, a number of Hippolytan works have been excluded as possible contenders for bar Salibi's source. *Dan.* and *Ant.* demonstrate no such parallels with any citations by bar Salibi regarding the contest between Gaius and Hippolytus. Both Prigent and Brent agree that *De Apocalypsi* is most likely a fabricated title for a catena of Hippolytan extracts. By process of elimination, then, one must turn to the possibility that bar Salibi used an Hippolytan work under the title *Apology* and/or *Heads against Gaius*, noted in Ebed-Jesu's *Catalogue*. Given the lack of any extant manuscript from such a work, Prigent himself can only infer that since these citations imply a dispute and refutation, they must derive from such a work. Yet there is another possibility to this supposition.

Brent points out that the notion that Hippolytus would have referred to himself as *Hippolytus Romanus* is very odd, and the self-proclaimed designation as *beatus Hippolytus* is even more bizarre.⁵⁹⁷ He also notes that "there is no evidence before Epiphanius that an opponent of the *Apocalypse* deserved the description Γάλος

⁵⁹³ *Comm. Apoc.* 13 (Rev. 11:2): «Erit oppressio, qualis non fuit similes ab initio mundi», et cetera; h. e. dixit Hippolytus: Hoc non evenisse in obsidione Vespasiani, non enim accidit quidquam novi in mundo in diebus eius, praeter ea, quae iam antea evenerant...

⁵⁹⁴ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 159.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁶ E.g., *Hippolytus Romanus dixit: Apparuit vir, nomine Caius, qui asserebat Evangelium non esse Iohannis, nec Apocalypsim, sed Cerinthis haeretici ea esse. Comm. Apoc. praef.* (1-2).

⁵⁹⁷ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 149, 176.

ὁ αἵρετικὸς rather than – and as late as Eusebius – λογιωτάτος or ἐκκλησιαστικὸς ἀνὴρ.”⁵⁹⁸ Nor does bar Salibi’s record of this dialogue find any viable parallels with the standard literary forms of the time, seen for example in Justin’s *Dialogue with Trypho* or Origen’s *Contra Celsum*.⁵⁹⁹

Rather than presuming reliance upon a lost Hippolytan work, Brent argues that the supposedly Hippolytan elements in bar Salibi’s *Commentary* may actually reflect a strand of Hippolytan pseudepigrapha that is evidenced in other Eastern writings.⁶⁰⁰ Brent points to the works κατὰ Βήρωνος καὶ Ἑλικος, περὶ τῆς συντελείας τοῦ κόσμου and εἰς τὰ ἅγια θεοφάνεια as examples of such pseudepigrapha, the first of which is part of a florilegium entitled *Doctrina Patrum*.⁶⁰¹ Thus, Brent argues that Hippolytus was a frequent pseudonym for various works in the East and therefore bar Salibi’s *Commentary* has a preceding context.

Finally, Brent suggests that bar Salibi used *Hippolytus Romanus* as a cipher for the “orthodox” position in the squabble over the integrity of the Johannine writings. For support, he lists six works from Eastern writers that portray Hippolytus anachronistically as a representative of the apostolic age: Theodoret, Palladius, Andreas of Caesarea, Cyrillus of Scythopolis, Leontius of Byzantium and Pseudo-Chrysostom.⁶⁰²

What is the bearing of this for the bar Salibi commentaries? Regarding the question of bar Salibi’s source(s), Brent’s analysis introduces another plausible explanation that does not require attributing bar Salibi’s work to a lost work of Hippolytus that may never have existed at all. Rather, bar Salibi could have employed Hippolytus as an orthodox “everyman” and Gaius the heretical counterpart

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid., 149.

⁵⁹⁹ Cf. Smith, “Gaius”, 285-6.

⁶⁰⁰ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 178.

⁶⁰¹ *PG* X col. 829-852; *PG* X col. 903-952; and Achelis, *Hippolytus Werke*, 255-263 (respectively). Brent also points out the pseudepigraphic works of the Arabic Pentateuch with commentaries by the Fathers in *ms. Hutling 84* and *ms. Bodleian NE c.33*, printed in Fabricius’ edition of the works of Hippolytus. See Brent, *Hippolytus*, 178, esp. n. 193; J.A.S. Fabricius *Hippolyti Opera non antea collecta* (Hamburg: Christian Liebezeit, 1716). Critical edition by Franz Diekamp, *Doctrina Patrum de incarnatione verbi. Ein griechisches Florilegium aus der Wende des 7. und 8. Jahrhunderts* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1907).

⁶⁰² See Brent, *Hippolytus*, 183 for full citations of works and dates.

for a fictitious dialogue created by none other than bar Salibi himself and in support of which there is no historical evidence.⁶⁰³

The first piece of evidence that would stand in the way of Brent's position is the *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu, which attributes both the works *Heads against Gaius* and the *Apology* to Hippolytus. It is possible, though very unlikely, that Ebed-Jesu knew of an Hippolytan work by this title that went unmentioned by those familiar with Hippolytus' works for over a millennium. Brent favors the view of P. Nautin, that Ebed-Jesu manufactured this title as a gloss for what he derived from his own reading of the contest of Gaius and Hippolytus in bar Salibi's *Commentary*.⁶⁰⁴ Thus, both internal and external considerations preclude the *Heads against Gaius* and the *Apology*, "from being anything else than a general exegetical tradition dressed up pseudepigraphically under the cipher-names of 'Hippolytus' and 'Gaius'".⁶⁰⁵

The second evidentiary obstacle to Brent's view is the Statue and its list of possibly Hippolytan works, one of which pertains to the Gospel and Apocalypse of John. He argues that the title on the Statue does not necessitate that the work is of an apologetic genre.⁶⁰⁶ Also, as noted in Chapter II, Guarducci has correctly detected a [τ]ῷ before the title on the Statue, and my examination of the Statue itself shows that there is no room for the word ἀπολογία. Thus, the purpose and content of this work is entirely unknown. I have already argued that it is entirely plausible that it was concerned with the question of authorship of these works rather than an apology. Thus, for Brent, there is little reason to suggest equivalence between the title of the work mentioned by Ebed-Jesu and that of the Statue.⁶⁰⁷

Brent has levelled some heavy, and in some instances decisive blows to Prigent's attempt to verify the integrity of the Hippolytan quotations in bar Salibi's writings. Though Brent shows no awareness of Smith's work at all, by way of association his argument has also sustained critical damage. The most salient contributions to the question of bar Salibi's sources that Brent provides are: (i) the arguments against the authenticity of the work *Heads against Gaius* as a component

⁶⁰³ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 183.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., 170-74. See also Nautin, *Dossier*, 146.

⁶⁰⁵ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 184.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., 172.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

of what is clearly admitted on all sides as a florilegium, and (ii) the recognition of the likelihood that the later Syrian work may be explained by evidence that is in closer to the time of the composition of these writings (such as the pseudo-Hippolytan works and Ebed-Jesu's reliance upon later commentaries for his information on Hippolytus), rather than the earliest sources.

There are, however, weaknesses in Brent's argument. For example, just because figures ranging from Theodoret in the fifth century to Leontius of Byzantium in the seventh make Hippolytus to be a hero of the apostolic era, this does not mean that five or six centuries later bar Salibi does the same. Also, while Brent's explanation for why bar Salibi constructed a debate between Gaius and Hippolytus as the orthodox and heretical "everyman" is compelling, it does not adequately explain the reason why bar Salibi chose to pit *these two figures* against one another in the form of a debate. If Gaius was conceived to be the heretical "everyman", bar Salibi could have simply used the unspecified "*haereticus*" as he does elsewhere rather than putting a name to this figure. It is important to remember that bar Salibi paints an *historical* portrait of this contest between Gaius and Hippolytus. The question is whether his read on early church history is accurate, or did he manipulate his sources to reflect what he wanted them to say? The other possibility is that bar Salibi was the beneficiary of other, later accounts that were garbled but which he took to be historically accurate.

Thus far, it is clear that the standard explanation of bar Salibi's sources, as articulated by Prigent and Smith, does not add up. Brent's counter-proposal is plausible and does a better job of explaining the evidence than Prigent's argument, but it still requires modification. Thus, other items must be considered. First, the veracity of Ebed-Jesu's *Catalogue* will be considered before looking more carefully at the commentaries of bar Salibi.

9.3 The *Catalogue* of Ebed-Jesu

Ebed-Jesu's *Catalogue*⁶⁰⁸ is a curious bit of writing. He records a short list of works written by a person he knows only as "Hippolytus, Bishop and Martyr" – a designation identical to that recorded by Theodoret (*Haer. fab. comp.* 3.1; *Dial.* 1-3)

⁶⁰⁸ For Ebed-Jesu's *Catalogue* of Hippolytan works, see *BO* III.1, 15.

and Photius (*Bibl.* 202).⁶⁰⁹ Included in this list are works that are otherwise unattested *anywhere* in the history of Christianity, namely the *Heads against Gaius* and *Apology for the Apocalypse and Gospel of John*. But how trustworthy is this account and are these works authentic?

The Catalogue and the Omission of Known Hippolytan Works

One puzzling feature of the *Catalogue* is the absence of any mention of other well-known, extant works by Hippolytus. For example, why does Ebed-Jesu not include any of the works that are mentioned by Eusebius or Jerome? After noting his work on the chronology of the paschal feasts, Eusebius lists these Hippolytan works: *On the Hexaemeron*, *On the Works after the Hexaemeron*, *Against Marcion*, *On the Song of Songs*, *On Portions of Ezekiel*, *On the Passover* and *Against All Heresies* (*HE* 6.22).⁶¹⁰ As with Eusebius, Jerome knows of Hippolytus as a bishop, but is unaware of the location of his See. Jerome notes a number of Hippolytan works cited by Eusebius (*Against Marcion*, *Against All Heresies*, *On the Passover*, *On the Song of Songs*), but he also records additional works by Hippolytus not found in Eusebius' record: *On Exodus*, *On Genesis*, *On Zechariah*, *On the Psalms*, *On Isaiah*, *On Daniel*, *On Proverbs*, *On Ecclesiastes*, the putative *On the Apocalypse* (*De Apocalypsi*), *On the Resurrection*, *On the Pythonissa* and *On the Praise of our Lord and Savior* (*De vir. ill.* 61).

It is very puzzling that Ebed-Jesu failed to record at least some of these well-known and well-attested works. After all, Ebed-Jesu's contemporary, Nicephorus Callistus (*ca.* 1300), provides a lengthy list of corroborated Hippolytan works in his *Ecclesiastical History* (4.31).⁶¹¹ Moreover, Nicephorus' list makes no mention of any such *Apology* or *Heads against Gaius*. Indeed, if one reads Lightfoot's⁶¹² detailed listing of ancient references to a person named "Hippolytus", it is clear that this apologetic work listed by Ebed-Jesu is unattested by any other writer who

⁶⁰⁹ See Cerrato, 13.

⁶¹⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, 28-33; Brent, *Hippolytus*, 391-2.

⁶¹¹ For his list of Hippolytan works, see the excerpt in Lightfoot, *AF* i, 2, 349-50.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*, 318-65.

mentions a certain Hippolytus – even where there may exist confusion over multiple identities that may have shared the same name.⁶¹³

The Catalogue and the Dubious Link with Known Hippolytan Works

But what about the other works that Ebed-Jesu attributes to Hippolytus? Is it possible to authenticate these works as certifiably Hippolytan? Ebed-Jesu lists a peculiar work entitled ἑρμηνείαν Δανιήλ τοῦ μικροῦ καὶ Σουσάννας (“Interpretation of *Little Daniel* and *Susannah*”). Strictly speaking no such work under the title *Little Daniel* (or *Young Daniel*) emerges from any of the early sources. There is a Syriac manuscript that bears the title *Little Daniel*, a text which is commonly dated no later than the beginning of the third century; but this is dating based exclusively on the testimony of Ebed-Jesu.⁶¹⁴

According to W. Wright, the only available manuscript of this work is dated to the twelfth century.⁶¹⁵ H. Schmoldt, whose unpublished Ph.D. dissertation examined this manuscript, notes that the *Young Daniel* is a composite, redacted work comprised of two primary components, the bulk of which is the apocalyptic sections that are Jewish and may date from the first or second centuries, the other sections are Christian and represent a later addition.⁶¹⁶ Lightfoot himself examined a fragment of this work in Wright’s *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts*, and surmised this *Little Daniel* is “a distinctly Christian apocryphal writing.”⁶¹⁷

The question naturally presents itself, which work did Ebed-Jesu intend in his notice of Hippolytan works? Is it possible that Ebed-Jesu meant Hippolytus’ well-known *Commentary on Daniel*?⁶¹⁸ In this case one would expect to find some precedent of *this* title in the various extant lists of Hippolytan works, but there is

⁶¹³ See Chapter 2.

⁶¹⁴ See Lorenzo DiTommaso, *The Book of Daniel and the Apocryphal Daniel Literature*. Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 20 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 108-113.

⁶¹⁵ British Library, *cod. Add.* 18715 fols. 239v-241r, listed in W. Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired Since the Year 1838* (London, 1870), No. XXXII, 1.19.

⁶¹⁶ See H. Schmoldt, “Die Schrift ‘Vom jungen Daniel’ und ‘Daniels letzte Vision.’ herausgabe und Interpretation zweier apokalyptischer Texte.” (Ph.D. Diss.: Hamburg, 1972), 106-113, cited in DiTommaso, 109.

⁶¹⁷ Lightfoot, *AF* i, 2, 393.

⁶¹⁸ Such is the opinion of G. Martínez, “Pseudo-Danielic Literature,” 160.

none. Perhaps the two works are markedly similar such that confusion in content may lead to confusion in titles? Yet here it is worth noting that the extant manuscript of *Little Daniel* is composed almost entirely in poetic meter,⁶¹⁹ Hippolytus' *Dan* is not. Thus the difference in genre does not permit questions of equivalence between these works.

Moreover, what about the work *Susannah*, which Ebed-Jesu distinctly mentions? At the beginning of *Dan.*, Hippolytus refers to the LXX addition *Susannah* as "Scripture" (*Dan.* 1.5.1). If Ebed-Jesu had actually read Hippolytus' *Dan.*, and if this is the work he intended under the title *Little Daniel*, this may partially explain his addition of the title *Susannah*. However, if Ebed-Jesu had indeed read *Dan.*, he would have known the proper title of this work.

The other possibility is that Ebed-Jesu is relying heavily on relatively recent information and equating it with similar, but different, evidence from much earlier. Hippolytus' *Commentary on Daniel* was well known, and Ebed-Jesu's knowledge of the Syriac *Little Daniel*, which is clearly evidenced by the MS tradition as being available during his time, may have created a problem of equivocation. The fact that Ebed-Jesu chose to record the title *Little Daniel* rather than *Daniel* lends itself to the fact that he was unfamiliar with the authentic Hippolytan work. This is confirmed by his listing of *Susannah* as a separate work, for, as Lightfoot noted, whereas the Greek additions to Daniel (*Susannah*, the *Three Children*, *Bel and the Dragon*) are normally included under the title Daniel, Ebed-Jesu separates *Susannah* as unique.⁶²⁰

Finally, what about the other title listed by Ebed-Jesu and translated by Lightfoot as the *περὶ οἰκονομίας*? There is a work listed on the Statue in Rome whose first part is destroyed and appears as [-----] *νίας*. However, there is simply not enough to connect these two without a generous dose of speculation. Lightfoot hypothesized that this refers to the work listed on the Statue *in addition to* Jerome (*De vir. ill.* 61): *A Homily on the praise of our Lord and Saviour* (*προσομιλία de Laude Domini Salvatoris*), which Jerome states was delivered by Hippolytus in the presence of Origen.⁶²¹ Brent argues that this title very well may reflect the Hippolytan pseudepigrapha of this time, especially since the use of *οἰκονομία* was a

⁶¹⁹ DiTommaso, 109.

⁶²⁰ Lightfoot, *AF* i, 2, 393.

⁶²¹ Lightfoot, *AF* i, 2, 398, 423. Cf. Chapter 5, 5.6.

“particularly Eastern commonplace” term at this time for the trinitarian mystery by Ebed-Jesu’s time.⁶²²

There is good reason to exercise great caution in presuming the authenticity of Ebed-Jesu’s list of Hippolytan works. The fact is, in a strict sense, and taken as they appear in his *Catalogue*, none of the five works he attributes to Hippolytus are corroborated by any other witness. Whereas there are traces of similarity between some of his titles with early lists of Hippolytan works, these are not enough to confidently identify them as the same. Moreover, those well-known works of Hippolytus noted by Eusebius, Jerome and others make *no* appearance in Ebed-Jesu’s list whatsoever. This is particularly strange given that Ebed-Jesu lists the “*librum Historiae Ecclesiasticae*” in his *Catalogue* of Eusebian works.⁶²³ Finally, it should be noted that the bulk of the extant explanatory evidence derives from sources that are contemporaneous with Ebed-Jesu, not those from the early church. Having examined these other works, it is to the final two titles in this *Catalogue* that we now turn.

The Catalogue and the Apology/Heads against Gaius

In light of the preceding analysis, the works *Apology* and *Heads against Gaius* are should not automatically be granted absolute value as genuine works of Hippolytus. No early source professes to know anything about either of these works. As noted in Chapter I, the *Apology* has been associated with the title on the plinth of the statue of Hippolytus, but it is far from certain that the title on the statue is an apologetic work. The two titles also do not correspond precisely: the names of the Johannine works are in reverse order from those listed on the statue. Moreover, there is nothing to indicate the work on the Statue was an apologetic work.⁶²⁴

As with the other titles on Ebed-Jesu’s list of Hippolytan works, however, there is an explanation from sources that are much closer to the time of Ebed-Jesu. The argument originally noted by Nautin – that Ebed-Jesu did not actually possess a copy of the *Apology* or *Heads*, but simply surmised their existence after reading bar

⁶²² Brent, *Hippolytus*, 345.

⁶²³ *BO* III.1, 18.

⁶²⁴ For a convenient chart listing the Hippolytan works by Eusebius, Jerome, the Statue and Ebed-Jesu, see Lightfoot, *AF* i, 2, 420-1.

Salibi's *Commentary* – is very compelling and in all probability correct. In this case Ebed-Jesu would have presumed the existence of the former work from reading bar Salibi's preface, and the latter from the dialogue between Gaius and Hippolytus in the main body of the text.

Is it likely that Nautin is correct and Ebed-Jesu derived his knowledge of these supposedly Hippolytan works from bar Salibi's commentaries? If so, where did bar Salibi get *his* information? It is clear that he has utilized an Hippolytan florilegium for much of his *Commentary*. Prigent admitted this, but maintained that a portion of this florilegium is the authentic work *Heads against Gaius*. Thus, bar Salibi's *Commentary* is the only known source that may authenticate this putative work. In order to establish the fact that this work was not the source of bar Salibi's commentaries, it is necessary to establish the sources of this *Commentary*. If it is possible to demonstrate that bar Salibi has not used a singular source for his report of a Gaius/Hippolytus dispute, then Ebed-Jesu's *Catalogue* of Hippolytan titles will be confirmed as spurious.

9.4 Dionysius bar Salibi: A Closer Look at the Evidence

In light of the preceding sections of this chapter, the groundwork has been laid for a more technical examination of bar Salibi's writings. Much attention has been paid to the relationship of bar Salibi's writings with Patristic, but what can one deduce from looking at the bar Salibi evidence on its own? What features are unique to the way in which bar Salibi composed his writings? He is, after all, separated from the Patristic era by a vast amount of time, and thus it is naïve to presume his own concerns, methodology and genre of writing are identical to those of the Fathers. By understanding the unique aspects of bar Salibi's commentaries, the relationship between these writings and the earliest evidence will become much clearer.

First, it is necessary to examine the nature of the criticism-response form of bar Salibi's writings. I shall argue that the way in which bar Salibi portrays the supposed dispute between Gaius and Hippolytus is mimicked elsewhere in his writings, and therefore it may not be an authentic account of such a confrontation. Second, I shall examine the way in which bar Salibi constructs the preface to his *Commentary on the Apocalypse*. It will be shown that the way in which bar Salibi presents the information he claims to derive from Eusebius is not altogether accurate.

Third, I shall demonstrate that there are other instances of discrepancies between bar Salibi's account and the writings of the earliest church Fathers. Fourth, in light of these other points, I shall argue for the likelihood that bar Salibi has constructed the dispute between Gaius and Hippolytus based on his sources, which is primarily a garbled catena, part of which is dependent upon Epiphanius' testimony of the so-called *Alogi*. Finally, I shall conclude with an analysis of the relationship between Epiphanius' *Alogi* and bar Salibi's Gaius.

The Criticism-Response Form of bar Salibi's Writings

It is true that bar Salibi records the criticisms of Gaius as within the context of a dispute with Hippolytus. Gaius presents objectionable elements he has found in the Johannine record, typically due to elements of incompatibility with other Scripture. Hippolytus, in turn, provides a rebuttal in defense of the compatibility of these texts. For Prigent, Hippolytus' responses had the precise nature of what would be recorded in an *Apology*, and therefore the work *Heads against Gaius/Apology* must be bar Salibi's source. Concerning Gaius' objections, J. D. Smith argues, "The significance of the formulation and role of the objections which Gaius raised against the Gospel of John and Revelation cannot be overestimated."⁶²⁵ Yet, this is precisely what Smith proceeds to do.

Smith argues that the form and content of the dialogue between Gaius and Hippolytus as recorded by bar Salibi offers unique insights into the nature of Gaius' *Dialogue*. Moreover, he makes the dubious assertion that there are discernible parallels between bar Salibi's introductory formulae with that of Epiphanius: the former beginning with "*Caius the heretic objected...*", the latter with "he says...".⁶²⁶ Smith's analysis digresses into further speculative assertions about the nature and mode of the "elegant rhetorical question form" of the objections, as though the conflict bar Salibi records between Gaius and Hippolytus was of such a unique calibre that it is unparalleled anywhere else.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁵ Smith, "Gaius", 281.

⁶²⁶ Ibid, 283.

⁶²⁷ Smith does claim, however, that Gaius' objections have similarities to what may be found in the Rabbinic Midrash and Greco-Roman rhetoric (see Smith, "Gaius", Appendix C). Yet Smith admits (472-3), that it is impossible to connect Gaius with any specific rhetorical school because, "Gaius does not give a detailed discussion of the objections nor does he employ any of the technical vocabulary

Smith errs on at least two points here. First, the *Dialogue* was not between Gaius and Hippolytus but between Gaius and Proclus the Montanist. As such it cannot be the source of bar Salibi's record of a dispute between the pair of Roman orthodox churchmen.⁶²⁸ Even if bar Salibi were dependent upon Hippolytus' putative refutation of Gaius, as Smith suggests elsewhere,⁶²⁹ this does not mean that *this* work accurately reflects the form and content of the earlier work in which these criticisms purportedly arose. Secondly, and more importantly, is the fact that there is nothing markedly unique about bar Salibi's record of the form of the objections and responses by Gaius and Hippolytus at all.

So much attention has been paid to the few citations of Gaius and Hippolytus in the bar Salibi commentaries that the rest of bar Salibi's writings have been neglected. Yet there is much to be gained in examining the broader scope of these writings. In particular, it is abundantly clear that bar Salibi employs the criticism-response form *throughout* his writings.

In each of his commentaries on the Gospels, bar Salibi attributes numerous objections to "heretics", some of whom he names, others he does not. To each of these objections he provides a rebuttal. The form of these objections and refutations bears a striking resemblance to those of Gaius and Hippolytus.

In his commentaries on the Synoptics, one finds additional examples of the criticisms-response form. Examples of the introductory formulae of the criticism and response are as follows:

Mt. 1:25: *Haereticus vero dicit... Et dicimus...*

Mt. 2:13: *At obiiciunt pagani... Et dicimus...*

which the trained rhetorician would have applied in his literary and historical criticism of a literary document."

⁶²⁸ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 149. Brent notes, "If these fragments [of Gaius' statements in bar Salibi] are summaries of a position on the *Apocalypse*, any reason for assigning them specifically to the πρὸς Πρόκλον mentioned by Eusebius is as tenuous as the supposition that that dialogue was still available in the 11th Century."

⁶²⁹ Smith, "Gaius", 197. On the one hand, Smith argues that bar Salibi never had a copy of Gaius' *Dialogue* (197), and that he derived his knowledge of Gaius' criticisms via the lost Hippolytan *Apology*, which is the same as the *Heads against Gaius* (202); yet on the other hand, Smith's later arguments seem to presume bar Salibi actually had a copy of Gaius' *Dialogue*: "Dionysius bar Salibi and Epiphanius have provided a valuable witness to this aspect [*viz.* Gaius' criticisms] in the form and content of Gaius' *Dialogue*" (281). He explains that Hippolytus' refutation of Gaius must have preserved the original content of Gaius' *Dialogue* (204), but this is pure speculation.

Mt. 26:38: *Haeretici dicunt... Ad eos dicimus...*

Mt. 27:46: *Ariani dicunt... Nestoriani et Chacedonenses dicunt... Nos vero dicimus*

ibid: Verumtamen quidam obiiciunt... Et dicimus...

ibid: Nunc redarguamus Arianos qui dicunt... Adversus eos dicimus...

Mk. 8:32: *Haeretici seu Ariani hoc argumentum adducunt... Adversus eos dicimus...*

Lk. 1:35: *Nestoriani dicunt... Adversus eos dicimus*

ibid: Rursus, haeretici dicunt... Adversus eos sic dicimus

ibid: Haeretici dicunt... Adversus eos dicimus

Lk. 2:21: *Haeretici et gentiles dicunt...*

ibid: Armeni, et Phantasiastae cum eis dicunt... Et dicimus...

Lk. 2:24: *Haeretici autem dicunt... et dicimus...*

Lk. 2:40: *Haeretici dicunt... et dicimus*

Lk. 2:49: *Interroga haereticus...*

Lk. 2:51: *Haeretici dicunt... et dicimus...*

Lk. 3:23: *Haeretici dicunt... et dicimus...*

*Exp. Evangel. (Caput XXIX)*⁶³⁰: *Obiiciunt nobis Arabes... Et dicimus...*

ibid (Caput XXX): Verum etiam Iudaei accusant nos... Et dicimus...

This is but a sampling; there is much more. In fact, bar Salibi's commentaries on Scripture are not the only sources for this method of writing; this criticism-response form is also seen elsewhere. For example, his *Response to the Arabs*,⁶³¹ a theological treatise against Islam, is saturated with it. Indeed, the entirety of this work is so thoroughly comprised of records of criticisms by "heretics" and responses by bar Salibi that to remove these objections and responses would leave as a remainder an insignificant portion of the text. There are also numerous examples

⁶³⁰ Dionysius bar Salibi, *Expositionem Suam Quatuor Evangelistarum* in D. Loftus (trans.), *The Exposition of Dionysius Syrus* (1672), which is also provided in the recent edition of I.-B. Chabot, *CSCO Script. Syri. T. 16* (1906), 5-22.

⁶³¹ See Joseph P. Amar (trans.), *Dionysius Bar Salibi, A Response to the Arabs*, *CSCO T. 239*, vol. 615 (Leuven: Peeters, 2005).

where bar Salibi issues a rhetorical question that is not attributed to any “heretic”, and in each instance he provides his own response (*Et dicimus...*).⁶³²

The standard formulation is very similar to what is found in the Gaius-Hippolytus confrontation: the “heretics” cite an objection after which a rebuttal is issued, typically beginning with “In response to them we say...” The sheer abundance of notices in bar Salibi’s writings of certain objections being levied, followed by answers provided, does not promote the argument for the unique qualities of the supposed dispute between Gaius and Hippolytus. The primary distinction with the Gaius/Hippolytus dialogue is that bar Salibi provides the names of the interlocutors.

Smith also makes much of the fact that Gaius pits the Johannine text against other Scripture to prove that it is uncanonical.⁶³³ Gaius’ criticisms, therefore, were unique in the way he used Scripture to invalidate the Johannine writings. However, this too is seen elsewhere in the writings of bar Salibi, with no indication it has derived from Gaius. In his commentary on Mt. 27:46 bar Salibi records an objection from an anonymous critic. In this instance Matthew’s account of Jesus’ last words on the cross is pitted against statements made in John’s Gospel. Bar Salibi states, “Nevertheless, someone objects: ‘How was the Son forsaken by the Father when He Himself said, “I am in my Father and My Father is in Me” [Jn. 10:38]?’”⁶³⁴ Just as he does elsewhere, bar Salibi provides a solution to this dilemma (without attributing it to Hippolytus). In his commentary on Lk. 2:24, some nameless heretics state that Luke’s account is incompatible with other Scripture. Bar Salibi states, “However, heretics state: ‘This does not fit with the Word God: “the days were fulfilled,” (Lk. 2:6) etc., neither that “He went up into the Temple and offered sacrifices”’ (Lev. 12:8).’”⁶³⁵ Later, in his comments on Lk. 10:25, bar Salibi notes that another group of

⁶³² For examples, see esp. his *Exp. Evangel.* just before his commentary on Matthew. A few examples include: [1] *Caput V. – Adversus eos qui dicunt Deum non generare. Et dicimus...*; [2] *Caput VIII. – Quare creatus est homo. Et dicimus...*; [3] *Dubium XI. – Cum sciret Deus hominem lapsurum, quare creavit eum? Et dicimus...*; [4] *Investigatio XII. – Quare Filius incarnatus est, et non Pater vel Spiritus? Et dicimus...*; [5] *Quaestio XIV. – Quomodo dicit Scriptura: Descendit Verbum et habitavit in Virgine, et: Misit Deus Filium suum et factus est? Et dicimus...* There are many other such instances in this portion of his commentary.

⁶³³ Smith, “Gaius”, 282, 286-7.

⁶³⁴ *CSCO Script. Syri. T. 99 Versio, 108: Verumtamen quidam obiiciunt: Quomodo Filius derelictus est a Patre cum ipse dixisset: Ego sum in Patre meo et Pater meus in me?*

⁶³⁵ *CSCO Script. Syri. T. 61 Versio, 229: Haeretici autem dicunt: Non convenit Verbo Deo illud: Impleti sunt dies, etc., neque illud: Ascendit in templum et obtulit sacrificia.*

nameless people (not designated “heretics” *per se*), suggest that Luke’s account of the lawyer who put Jesus to the test does not square with Matthew’s account. Here again bar Salibi has a ready answer.⁶³⁶

In light of these other objections, it is difficult to find agreement with Smith’s view that Gaius’ objections were unique in that he pitted Scripture against Scripture to disprove the reliability of one or the other citation. Rather, Gaius’ criticisms correspond directly with the general form of criticism-response writing that is seen elsewhere in the bar Salibi writings, and there is precedent elsewhere in bar Salibi’s writings for objections in which Scripture is used to refute other Scripture. This also has direct bearing on Prigent’s argument, for it is clear that scores of bar Salibi’s statements fit this mold and thus the Gaius/Hippolytus dialogue is not strictly unique. Rather than this type of form indicating an apologetic source, the widespread use of the criticism-response formula suggests it is more likely a reflection of bar Salibi’s own method of writing. In these instances, the only “Apology” written by a church Father was from the hand of the medieval Syrian Monophysite himself. Likewise, the prevalence of this criticism-response formula scattered throughout the writings of bar Salibi casts further doubt on the authenticity of the *Heads against Gaius/Apology* recorded by Ebed-Jesu, especially if Nautin and Brent are right in arguing that he presumed the existence of such a work from having read bar Salibi’s commentary. Given all of this, I find it difficult to maintain that bar Salibi indeed had a text in his hands in which an actual debate between Gaius and Hippolytus of Rome was recorded. There are two important questions that remain: (i) where did he derive the names *Caius* and *Hippolytus Romanus*, and (ii) if these names were not directly lifted from a singular source, where did he get his information? To determine the answers to these questions, we begin by turning to the preface of this exegetical work.

9.5 Bar Salibi’s Preface to his *Commentary on the Apocalypse*

Perhaps the most valuable piece of evidence that emerges from bar Salibi’s *Commentary on the Apocalypse* is the preface. He notes that there are many who doubt the authenticity of John’s Apocalypse before appealing to the testimony of

⁶³⁶ Ibid, 269. *Quidam dicunt: Hic diversus est ab eo quem Matthaeus memorat; et patet ex eo quod hic ut tentator accessit ad eum, ille vero non ut tentator, et ex eo quod scribam illum, quem dicunt Matthaeus [Matt. 19:16] et Marcus [Mark 10:17], Lucas post hunc eventum memorat [Luke 18:18]; quod si unus esset non bis descripsisset illum.*

Eusebius regarding those in the early church who claimed it was not his. However, a comparison between these two accounts suggests that his read of the Father of Church History is generally representative, but not fully accurate.

Dionysius bar Salibi⁶³⁷

And Eusebius of Caesarea declares the same thing in his ecclesiastical writings.

(1.a) For Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, says that the Revelation was not that of John the Apostle, but of another John, ‘the Presbyter,’ who lived in Asia. The reason is, that the style of the Revelation is not like the type of the language of the Gospel. Also John makes no mention of his name at all in the Gospel, but does put his name at the beginning and end of the Revelation.

Now we agree that he received the Revelation of which he wrote from our Lord.

(2.a) Irenaeus the bishop, and Hippolytus of Bozra say that the Revelation is that of John the Evangelist, and that it was granted about the end of the reign of Domitian.

(3.a) And Eusebius of Caesarea agrees with this, but immediately says that some do not accept it as being the Revelation of John the Apostle, so saying that it is the work of John the Elder, who was a contemporary of John the Apostle. And there are two tombs in Asia, one being that of the Evangelist, the other that of John the Elder.

Eusebius

(1.b) *HE* 7.25.7-8: “Yet I cannot admit that [the author of the Apocalypse] was the apostle, the son of Zebedee...who wrote the Gospel and Catholic Epistle. For from the style of both and the forms of expression, and the whole execution of the book, I judge that it is not his. For nowhere does the evangelist give his name, or mention himself in the Gospel ...however, the author of the Apocalypse introduces himself at the very beginning.

Cf. *HE* 3.39.4 – “John the Presbyter” (Papias)

(2.b) *HE* 3.18.2-3 (cf. 5.8.5-6): “Irenaeus ...speaks concerning John [the evangelist], ‘...for it (the Apocalypse) was seen not long ago...at the end of the reign of Domitian” (cf. *AH* 5.30.3).

Cf. *HE* 6.20.2: Beryllus of Bostra, Hippolytus, Gaius; *HE* 6.22.1-2: Works of Hippolytus.

(3.b) *HE* 3.39.5-7: “The name John is twice given by him (Papias)...the first being the one of the apostles, the other he explicitly calls a presbyter...This shows that the statement is true that there were two tombs in Ephesus, each of which is called John’s...It was probably the second that saw the Revelation which is attributed by name to John.”

⁶³⁷ Translation taken from Robinson, 486-7.

It is immediately obvious from this comparison that bar Salibi has blended together various pieces of Eusebius' testimony to create an historical narrative to introduce his commentary, or he drew his information from a catena tradition on the subject of the authenticity of the Apocalypse. But how accurate is bar Salibi's account? A closer look at the way in which he has handled Eusebius' testimony will go a long way in clarifying the nature of the Hippolytus/Gaius dialogue seen in the rest of his commentary. Each of these sections provided will therefore be discussed in detail.

Dionysius of Alexandria on the Authorship of the Apocalypse

Dionysius bar Salibi begins his preface with Eusebius' citation of Dionysius of Alexandria on the question of the authorship of the Apocalypse (*HE* 7.25). Bar Salibi is correct that Dionysius of Alexandria claims that John never put his name on the Gospel (or the Epistles), whereas the author of the Apocalypse does (*HE* 7.25.8-11). He also notes the differences in the style and language of the Apocalypse as compared to the Gospel and Epistle (*HE* 7.25.7-8, 17-27).

There are, however, elements that he attributes to Dionysius of Alexandria that are not found in his testimony. In particular, bar Salibi maintains that he claimed the Apocalypse was written by "John the presbyter" who lived in Asia. This does not appear anywhere in Eusebius' record of Dionysius of Alexandria's account. Rather, Dionysius of Alexandria's testimony alludes to the two "monuments" in Asia each bearing the name John. This other "John" is identified by Papias and Eusebius as "John the Presbyter" in *HE* 3.39.4-5, where these two tombs are mentioned. It may be a fair inference to claim Dionysius of Alexandria meant "John the Presbyter" given that he appears to allude to the Papian tradition, but the fact remains that bar Salibi has blended together different testimonies recorded in Eusebius.

Irenaeus and "Hippolytus of Bozra" on the Authorship of the Apocalypse

In this second section bar Salibi has combined the testimony of Irenaeus with that of a person named "Hippolytus of Bozra". His statements about Irenaeus are verifiable, however his notice of this other Hippolytus is very strange, for the earliest evidence does not speak of the existence of any such person.

The most obvious solution to the question of this unknown Hippolytus is that it is due to a garbled interpretation of Eusebius (*HE* 6.20.2). Here, Eusebius praises the writings of “very learned men of the time” whose letters to each other were preserved at Aelia. After familiarizing himself with works from this library Eusebius notes Beryllus, who was bishop of Bostra in Arabia, followed immediately by Hippolytus “who presided over another church”, followed by Gaius, who disputed with Proclus (*HE* 6.20.1-3).

Interestingly, Rufinus’ Latin translation⁶³⁸ confuses this passage in such a way that Hippolytus could easily be seen as from Bostra as well, yet bar Salibi would not have had Rufinus’ work in his hands. Thus, either bar Salibi drew his information from an earlier, erroneous translation, or directly from his own reading of Eusebius in which case he would be responsible for this mistaken reading. However, he would certainly not be the first.⁶³⁹ At the end of the fifth century, Gelasius mentions a certain “*Hippolyti episcopi et Martyris Arabum metropolis in memoria haeresium*”.⁶⁴⁰ Allen Brent also points to Jerome (*Chronicon* II, Ann. Abr. 2244, Alexandr. 6), who records, “*Geminus presbyter Antiochenus et Hippolytus et Beryllus episcopus Arabiae Bostrenus clari scriptores habentur*.”⁶⁴¹ There are also numerous written works that are attributed to “Hippolytus of Bostra”. G. Garitte notes that out of the twenty-one Armenian manuscripts in the catalogue of Yerevan that are attributed to Hippolytus, fourteen explicitly refer to him by the name “*Hipolit Bostrac i*.”⁶⁴² Some of these writings attributed to “Hippolytus of Bostra” are undoubtedly from Hippolytus of Rome.⁶⁴³ Interestingly, L.-M. Froidevaux notes that “Hippolytus of Bostra” is cited as the author of the portion entitled “Questions

⁶³⁸ Rufinus’ translation (*GCS* Band 6,2): *Erat inter caeteros et Beryllus scriptorum praecipuus, qui et ipse diversa opuscula dereliquit. Episcopus fuit hic apud Bostram, Arabiae urbem maximam. Erat nihilominus et Hippolytus, qui et ipse aliquanta scripta dereliquit, episcopus.*

⁶³⁹ Döllinger, 83. See also Cerrato, 74-5, who notes that as far back as the seventeenth century Jean-Baptiste Cotelier argued that “Hippolytus Bostra” was the product of a misreading of Eusebius. Cf. Jean-Baptiste Cotelier, *Ecclesiae graecae monumenta*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1677-86), vol. II (1681), 639-40.

⁶⁴⁰ See Lagarde, *Hippolyti Romani*, 90-1.

⁶⁴¹ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 149.

⁶⁴² Gérard Garitte, “Une nouvelle source du «De fide» géorgien attribué à Hippolyte,” *Revue D’Histoire Ecclésiastique* 43 (1968): 835-43, 842, n.3.

⁶⁴³ *Ibid*, 842.

and Answers” in the lemma of the seventh century Armenian florilegium entitled *Seal of the Faith*.⁶⁴⁴

It is possible that there was an historical person with this name. Froidevaux, for example, has argued that portions of this Armenian florilegium attributed to “Hippolytus of Bostra”, is actually a pre-Nicene work from this other Hippolytus. Froidevaux goes so far as to reconstruct his hypothetical life. However, it is worth noting that Eusebius demonstrates no knowledge of such a person. Both Eusebius and Jerome do not claim to know where Hippolytus’ See actually was. And since bar Salibi himself claims to have derived his information from Eusebius, either he has misread Eusebius’ testimony or he derived it from a later source that has already confused the location of Beryllus of Bostra with Hippolytus’ indeterminate See. It is important to note that bar Salibi’s notice of *Hippolytus Bosrae* is distinguished from the *Hippolytus Romanus* in the following confrontation with Gaius.

Finally, if bar Salibi is using Eusebius’ work as his only source, as he claims, he has again blended portions of his testimony that are derived from different portions of this work. Eusebius never mentions Irenaeus and Hippolytus together. He also never mentions Hippolytus’ views of the Apocalypse or any work by Hippolytus on this subject.

Dionysius bar Salibi, Eusebius and Papias on the Authorship of the Apocalypse

In this portion bar Salibi claims that Eusebius agrees with the testimonies of Irenaeus and *Hippolytus Bosrae*. It is true that Eusebius cites Irenaeus’ testimony of the dating of the Apocalypse twice (*HE* 3.18.2-3; 5.8.5-6), but only in the first instance does he affirm Irenaeus’ testimony. And it is clear in this passage that he only agrees with the dating of the Apocalypse as from the time of Domitian, for when he introduces Irenaeus’ statement this work is referred to as “the so-called Apocalypse of John”. This is Eusebius’ insertion; Irenaeus never questioned the Johannine authorship.

Bar Salibi also confuses Eusebius’ account of Papias (*HE* 3.39). He is wholly unaware that the argument for “John the Presbyter” as the author of the Apocalypse

⁶⁴⁴ “*Hippolyti episcopi Bostrenorum, in sanctam Trinitatem, quaestio et responsum.*” See L.-M. Froidevaux, “Les Questions et Réponses sur la sainte Trinité attribuées à Hippolyte, évêque de Bostra,” *Recherches de science religieuse* 50 (1962): 32-73, 49-54; cf. also Garitte, 836.

originated from *Eusebius himself*, who took his cue from Papias, and in all likelihood was influenced by the testimony of Dionysius of Alexandria (*HE* 7.25.7ff). Bar Salibi, however, implies that Eusebius is merely recording the views of others.

Analysis of the Historicity of the Preface

Returning to the preface as a whole, what is one to make of bar Salibi's account of Eusebius? If bar Salibi only used Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica* as his source, then he has clearly amalgamated a number of different passages into his preface. He is certainly aware of the major issues surrounding John's Apocalypse. The question of which "John" wrote it is not lost on bar Salibi, nor is the fact that there are two tombs in Asia that bear this name – an appeal made both by Eusebius and Dionysius of Alexandria in their attempt to explain (away) the author of the Apocalypse as someone other than John the Apostle. Yet there is also a demonstrable lack of precision to his testimony. He claims to have derived knowledge of a certain *Hippolytus Bosrae* from Eusebius, who himself never mentions any such person. He puts words in the mouth of Dionysius of Alexandria that he never uttered. Also, he totally exonerates Eusebius from having any qualms over who authored the Apocalypse. Bar Salibi makes Eusebius out to be in agreement with Irenaeus and *Hippolytus Bosrae*, when it is clear Eusebius himself manipulated Irenaeus' words to cast doubt on the "so-called" Apocalypse, and he expresses his own doubts as to its apostolic authorship.

Analysis of the Rest of the Preface: Introducing the Gaius/Hippolytus Dispute

After his historical introduction, bar Salibi immediately begins to cite Hippolytus of Rome and his description of the opponent of the Apocalypse, Gaius. It is curious that it is not until this section that bar Salibi demonstrates his knowledge of another critical issue: whether or not Cerinthus was the author of the Apocalypse (and the Gospel) of John.⁶⁴⁵ He would have been aware of this issue from the passages he has already noted. Dionysius of Alexandria makes explicit reference to the question of Cerinthus and the Apocalypse, but nothing of John's Gospel. Epiphanius, however, does link the two, and it is interesting that elsewhere in his

⁶⁴⁵ Cf. Brent, *Hippolytus*, 146.

commentaries, bar Salibi demonstrates that he is also familiar with the testimony of this church Father.⁶⁴⁶ The question is whether bar Salibi has derived his information from a singular source, or blended information from various sources as he has done in the first part of his preface.

Smith argues that bar Salibi's notice of Hippolytus as the narrator proves that his source was from this church Father. But if this is indeed the case, as Brent notes it is bizarre that Hippolytus would have referred to himself as *Hippolytus Romanus* and would have been found "quoting himself in saintly proportions" as *beatus Hippolytus*.⁶⁴⁷ Brent suggests bar Salibi has emerged on the back end of a long literary legend concerning issues surrounding the Johannine literature that ultimately derives from Epiphanius' notice of the *Alogi*. Thus, bar Salibi himself is responsible for the creation of this exchange between Hippolytus and Gaius based on a general hermeneutical tradition concerning John's Apocalypse.

This is possible, if not likely, especially in light of the Hippolytan pseudepigrapha that Brent notes; but it may also be the case that bar Salibi has also surmised Gaius' opposition to the Apocalypse from a misreading of Eusebius. In *HE* 3.28.1-2 Eusebius only notes that Gaius, "in his dispute", wrote against Cerinthus' carnal chiliasm that he claims in his own apocalyptic work. Immediately afterwards, Eusebius provides a shortened form of Dionysius of Alexandria's statements, of which bar Salibi was well aware.⁶⁴⁸ It is also interesting that Eusebius, in transitioning from Gaius' statements to those of Dionysius, states, "And Dionysius [in his work *On the Promises*] ... mentions the same man" (*HE* 3.28.3). A careless reading could conclude that Eusebius means Gaius, not Cerinthus. As discussed in the previous chapter, if modern scholarship may be used as an analogue, it is not unreasonable to wonder whether bar Salibi has interpreted Eusebius' statements along the same lines as what is evident throughout the past century, which is to see the placement of Gaius' statements juxtaposed with those of Dionysius of Alexandria

⁶⁴⁶ He notes Epiphanius in his statements on Matt. 27:5, in A. Vaschalde (ed.), *Dionysii bar Salibi: Commentarii in Evangelia* II (1). Versio. *CSCO Scriptores Syri Series Secunda*, Tomus XCIX (Leuven, 1933), 82. Also, his statements on Lk. 22:15, in *ibid.* II (2), p. 319.

⁶⁴⁷ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 176.

⁶⁴⁸ In his preface, bar Salibi cites Hippolytus as stating that Cerinthus taught carnal eating and drinking and many other blasphemies. This is identical information to what is found in Dionysius of Alexandria, and very similar to what is noted by Gaius of Rome (*HE* 3.28.1-5). Cf. Smith, "Gaius", 197.

and conclude that Gaius must be the one who maintained these views. From here bar Salibi, encouraged by Eusebius' note that Gaius was involved in a dispute on this subject, could have simply supplied the name Gaius as the antagonist in the standard criticism-response formula that he uses freely elsewhere.

It is peculiar that bar Salibi never mentioned the name "Gaius" in his earlier historical introduction, for Gaius clearly spoke out about Cerinthus and his *Apocalypse*. If he understood Gaius' criticism of the *Cerinthian Apocalypse* in *HE* 3.28 as *not* bearing any reference to John's Apocalypse, then this would have provided bar Salibi with an excellent "learned" defense against the views mentioned by Dionysius of Alexandria. He could have pointed to Gaius as an "orthodox" and "ecclesiastical" man who notes that Cerinthus pseudonymously composed *his own* apocalyptic work under the guise of "a great apostle". But bar Salibi makes no such appeal to Gaius as an "orthodox" respondent to this accusation. This leaves two possibilities: either (i) bar Salibi is wholly unaware of Gaius' statements regarding Cerinthus and a certain apocalyptic work, or (ii) he has wrongly interpreted Gaius' statements.

The first is unlikely given that bar Salibi is drawing on Eusebian texts wherein Gaius is featured. The second possibility provides the better way forward. It is important to note that in Eusebius' notice of Gaius and the *Cerinthian Apocalypse*, no mention is made of Gaius as an "ecclesiastical" or "learned" man, nor is there any hint that he was to be admired for his fight against the Montanists, that he wrote his comments about Cerinthus to refute the Montanist Proclus, or that he was located in Rome. In this passage alone (*HE* 3.28.1-2), Gaius is divorced from all defining factors that are present elsewhere: he is simply quoted for his views against Cerinthus' *Apocalypse*. From this passage alone, Gaius could easily be misunderstood as the spokesman for the view that Cerinthus was the true author of the Apocalypse. In this case, bar Salibi has his orthodox hero, Hippolytus, who, as Prigent notes, is a major source for him throughout his *Commentary on the Apocalypse*. He also has the despicable enemy, "Gaius", whose perceived opinions against John's Apocalypse and role in a dispute on this subject may well have earned him the antagonist position in the standard criticism-response formulae that is prevalent throughout bar Salibi's writings.

There is good reason, therefore, to suggest that bar Salibi has created this exchange from a source or a catena that was available to him and simply supplied the

names Gaius and Hippolytus. It is reasonable to object, however, that bar Salibi claims in his preface to have derived this information from Hippolytus. Yet the veracity of bar Salibi's citation of Hippolytus is not free from questions. It is therefore necessary to examine the degree to which bar Salibi may be trusted when citing the words of Hippolytus (and other early church Fathers).

9.6 Discrepancies between Bar Salibi and The Early Sources

Did bar Salibi actually have a copy of a Hippolytan work in his hands wherein Gaius is recorded as making these claims? In order to test this theory, it is worth comparing the way bar Salibi cites Hippolytus with what is known from his extant literature. There are significant differences in the way bar Salibi cites Hippolytus in contrast to those statements in the extant Hippolytan literature. The following examples do not bolster confidence that all of the information bar Salibi claims to have derived from Hippolytus actually does.

1. Gwynn originally noted a disagreement between the way in which bar Salibi portrayed Hippolytus' response to Gaius' final objection on the binding of Satan (Rev. 20:2-3) versus the binding of "the strong man" (cf. Mt. 12:29), and that of Hippolytus' views in *Dan.* 4.33.4-5. In the latter passage, Satan has *already* been bound; in bar Salibi's notice, Hippolytus asks mockingly, "If the Devil has been bound, how does he deceive the faithful and persecute and plunder men?"⁶⁴⁹ Indeed, there are more similarities between Gaius' views as recorded by bar Salibi and those of Hippolytus in *Dan.* 4.33.4-5 than between Hippolytus' statements in *Dan.* and those in bar Salibi.

2. Hill has also noted disagreement on the portrayals of Hippolytus' eschatological views. In contrast to the chiliastic views that bar Salibi attributes to Hippolytus in his response to the same objection of Gaius, Hill has argued that a close reading of *Ant.* 61, 65 (cf. *Dan.* 4.11.4) shows that he did *not* actually maintain such chiliastic notions, but rather opposed them.⁶⁵⁰ Moreover, Hill demonstrates that Hippolytus' view of the millennium in Rev. 20 – the very chapter against which

⁶⁴⁹ *Comm. Apoc.* 19 (Rev. 20:2): *Hippolytus refutat eum et dicit: Si est vinctus impostor, quomodo decipiat fideles et persequitur spoliaturque homines?* Here I cite the English translation of Gwynn, 403.

⁶⁵⁰ Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 160-5.

Gaius objects – actually refers to the present age.⁶⁵¹ This does not square with bar Salibi’s portrayal of Hippolytus.

3. Allen Brent has made two very succinct arguments that the supposed dialogue between Hippolytus and Gaius demonstrates more contradictions than similarities between bar Salibi’s record of Hippolytus and features of *Dan.* and *Ant.*⁶⁵² First, bar Salibi cites Hippolytus as equating the *pollutionem desolationis* with the Antichrist,⁶⁵³ but he claims for himself the interpretation that it is the little horn of Daniel 7:8, 20-21 that is the Antichrist. In fact, Brent shows that bar Salibi’s own words are actually those of Hippolytus in *Ant.* 28 and 47. Not only has bar Salibi attributed to Hippolytus an interpretation that was not his own, but he claimed what Hippolytus *did* say for himself. Second, Brent also argues that it is “extremely suspicious” that the Logos Christology, which is a distinctive feature of Hippolytus’ *Dan.* and *Ant.*, is nowhere to be found in bar Salibi’s dialogue between Hippolytus and Gaius.⁶⁵⁴

To these points I add the following:

4. In his preface, bar Salibi cites Hippolytus’ views of Cerinthus that are not found in the extant Hippolytan corpus:

This Cerinthus was one who taught circumcision, and was angry with Paul when he did not circumcise Titus, and the Apostle calls him and his disciples in one of his letters ‘sham apostles, crafty workers.’ Again he teaches that the world was created by angels, and that our Lord was not born of a virgin. He also teaches carnal eating and drinking, and many other blasphemies. The Gospel and Revelation of John, however, are like the teaching which the Scriptures contain; and so they are liars who say that the Revelation is not by the Apostle John.⁶⁵⁵

It is true that in his *Refutatio* (7.22; 10.21) Hippolytus notes that Cerinthus did not believe in the Virgin birth, rather he held adoptionistic views of Jesus and that the world was created by an angelic power. These are also noted by Irenaeus (*AH* 1.26.1), to whom Hippolytus was indebted for much of his information, with the exception that an angel was responsible for creation – that is uniquely Hippolytan.⁶⁵⁶

⁶⁵¹ Ibid., 167.

⁶⁵² Brent, *Hippolytus*, 179-80.

⁶⁵³ *Comm. Apoc.* 12 (Rev. 11:2).

⁶⁵⁴ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 180-2.

⁶⁵⁵ English translation in Robinson, 487; Latin translation in *Comm. Apoc.* 1-2.

⁶⁵⁶ Ps.-Tertullian makes the same claim (*Adv. omn. haer.* 3). See Klijn and Reinink, 4. Irenaeus (*AH* 1.26) only refers to Cerinthus’ belief that a “Power” created the world.

However, this is all that connects this statement from bar Salibi with known Hippolytan works.

Regarding the “eating and drinking” and other blasphemies, this has direct correlation with what bar Salibi has already recorded from the testimony of Dionysius of Alexandria’s testimony in Eusebius (*HE* 3.28.5; 7.25.3). It is important to note that Gaius is *not* recorded as making this accusation (*HE* 3.28.1-2). Gaius’ description of the Cerinthian millennium is painted with broader strokes. He notes only that the flesh will be subject to desires and pleasures.

Also, the fact that Hippolytus is cited as criticizing Cerinthus’ views of Paul and circumcision caused Klijn and Reinink to conclude that bar Salibi did not derive this from an authentic Hippolytan work. Rather, they note that, “These are ideas concerning Cerinthus that cannot be found earlier than in Epiphanius.”⁶⁵⁷ It is true that nowhere in Hippolytus’ *Refutatio* or in Ps.-Tertullian’s work is there any mention of Cerinthus’ views on circumcision or Paul. Irenaeus mentions similar views concerning the Ebionites, whom he links with Cerinthus on account of their erroneous Christology, but not in praxis (*AH* 1.26.2). Epiphanius, however, is more explicit in his account. He is the first to read Cerinthus and his followers into Paul’s second Epistle to the Corinthians (11:13), where Paul calls them “false prophets and deceitful workers” (*Haer.* 28.4.6). This is precisely what bar Salibi records. What about the notice of Cerinthus’ disillusionment that Paul did not circumcise Titus? No mention of this is made by Hippolytus or Irenaeus, but again Epiphanius provides this information in *Haer* 28.4.1-2, where he has read Cerinthus into the account in Galatians 2:3-5. As Klijn and Reinink suggest, Epiphanius may have been influenced by the tradition recorded in the *Epistula Apostolorum*, which lists Cerinthus as one of the “pseudo-apostles”. From this notice, Epiphanius may have linked Cerinthus as one of the ψευδαπόστολοι mentioned by Paul in II Cor. 11:13 (and the ψευδαδελφους of Gal. 2:4).⁶⁵⁸

Thus, bar Salibi cites information that he claims to have originated from Hippolytus. Some of this information does come from Hippolytus, but much of it also comes from Dionysius of Alexandria by way of Eusebius, as well as Epiphanius’ account of Cerinthus.

⁶⁵⁷ Klijn and Reinink, 6.

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 10.

5. In his exposition on Lk. 18:8, bar Salibi cites Hippolytus as referring to the Antichrist as the unjust judge, and the widow as the synagogue of the Jews. In *Ant.* 57 Hippolytus does connect the unrighteous judge with the Antichrist, however the widow is not the Synagogue but Jerusalem.

Bar Salibi and Other Patristic Sources

There are various other instances, not involving Hippolytus, where bar Salibi claims to derive information from early sources. In at least two places there is an apparent disjunction between what bar Salibi records and what the earlier sources actually said. To demonstrate this I note his exposition on Mt. 27:5, where bar Salibi cites from Papias, followed immediately by Epiphanius. Of Papias, he records: “Papias states that [Judas’] male organs were swollen, and that putrid substance, vile stench and maggots came out of them.”⁶⁵⁹ The only Papian fragment that resembles this comes from Apollinaris of Laodicea in the fourth century, who records that “His genitals appeared more loathsome and larger than anyone else’s, and when he relieved himself there passed through it pus and worms from every part of his body.”⁶⁶⁰ J. Rendell Harris, who is to be remembered for adamantly holding that bar Salibi intended Gaius as the spokesman for the otherwise anonymous criticism against John, claims here that the Syrian Father has derived this citation after manipulating the catena that does not go back to Papias himself, but to Apollinaris.⁶⁶¹ The difficulties surrounding the textual tradition of Papias are too numerous to know definitively whether bar Salibi’s information is fully accurate, but the very next line suggests the verdict is negative.

Immediately following this, bar Salibi cites Epiphanius on Judas’ death. “Epiphanius says, [Judas] lived forty days after the crucifixion and was split apart in the middle, and all of his internal organs were poured out.”⁶⁶² Yet nowhere does

⁶⁵⁹ My translation. “Et Papias dicit: «Etiam membra eius virilia intumuerunt, et putredo et foetor cum vermibus manabant de eis.»” *CSCO* tom. 49, vol. 98, 82.

⁶⁶⁰ English translation in Holmes, 316 (Fragment 18). The text from Apollinaris is reconstructed from various fragments. C. Preuschen, *Antilegomena*, 2nd ed. (Giessen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1905), 97-99.

⁶⁶¹ J. Rendell Harris, “Did Judas Really Commit Suicide?” *American Journal of Theology* 4, n. 3 (Jul. 1900), 507.

⁶⁶² *CSCO* tom. 49, vol. 98, 82-3: Epiphanius dicit: «Vixit post crucifixionem quadraginta diebus, et disruptus est per medium et diffusa sunt omnia viscera eius».

Epiphanius actually make the claim that Judas lived for forty days after the crucifixion, or that Judas' death was solely by disembowelment. One would expect to find such statements in his refutation of the Cainites, throughout which he associates Cain and Judas. In *Haer.* 38.8.3, Epiphanius actually conflates the account of Judas' death in a field (*via* disembowelment) as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (1:18) with Matthew's account (27:5) that Judas hanged himself. He does not say this occurred forty days after Jesus' death, however.

This by no means implies that bar Salibi is totally unreliable in his recounting of the events of the early church. Yet it *must* be recognized that his citations of his predecessors should not be taken at face value. In those instances where bar Salibi's information is demonstrably inaccurate, either he has simply misread the earliest sources themselves, or, as Brent notes, he may stand at the end of a tradition that has provided bar Salibi with mangled versions of the evidence. In this case, bar Salibi is likely reliant upon a garbled catena in which topics such as the death of Judas, the antichrist, and the opposition to the Apocalypse have been associated with the writings of the earliest Fathers, sometimes accurately, and other times inaccurately.

9.7 The Constructed Dialogue Between Gaius and Hippolytus

Are we to presume the historicity of this dialogue between Hippolytus and Gaius, or is this narrative a figment of bar Salibi's historical misunderstanding in conjunction with his standard criticism-response formulation that he uses to drive his writings forward? Hippolytus' influence on bar Salibi's *Commentary on the Apocalypse* is certifiable, however it is curious that this is seen predominantly in those sections where no direct reference to Hippolytus is made. In contrast, when bar Salibi does claim to cite Hippolytus, there are various instances when the content of what the former puts in the mouth of the latter does not square with the positions held by Hippolytus in his extant writings. Other times Hippolytus appears to be the spokesman for multiple parties, as in the preface where Hippolytus is cited with words that belong partly to himself, partly to Dionysius of Alexandria and partly to Epiphanius. Thus, it is rash to maintain that just because bar Salibi introduces a dialogue with the phrase *Hippolytus Romanus dixit* what follows, therefore, must have actually been uttered by the speaker. Bar Salibi appears to make the speakers in his narrative say what he wants them to say rather than what they actually did say.

It should be remembered that the criticism-response form is a notable feature throughout bar Salibi's commentaries on the Gospels and in his refutation of the Arabs. His *Commentary on the Apocalypse* is no exception. The primary difference between this work and the others is that the otherwise anonymous interlocutors are given identities. Did bar Salibi simply give names to these participants based on what he found in the writings of Eusebius? Brent thinks that bar Salibi already had a text in front of him in which the figures "Gaius" and "Hippolytus" were in dispute with one another.⁶⁶³ This is possible, but it is more likely that bar Salibi has read Gaius' statements concerning Cerinthus and his *Apocalypse* in Eusebius and presumed him to lie behind the testimonies of Dionysius of Alexandria and Epiphanius. It is not difficult to see how bar Salibi could have presumed, based upon his reading of Eusebius (*HE* 3.28.1-2), that "Gaius" – deprived of any other identifying remarks – was involved in a dispute on the subject of an "Apocalypse" by Cerinthus who pretended it was by "a great apostle". Armed with his Hippolytan florilegium that clearly maintained an opposing view, the Syrian Monophysite may well have provided the names "Gaius" and "Hippolytus" as the identities of the parties for his criticism-response form. The form of the Gaius/Hippolytus dialogue is consistent with what is found elsewhere in bar Salibi's writings, thus there is nothing demonstrably unique about this supposed dispute. And, since the criticism-response form is not found anywhere else in his *Commentary on the Apocalypse* outside of the statements of Gaius and Hippolytus, it is certainly possible that this dispute represents nothing more than bar Salibi's insertion of what he perceived to be a known critic of the Apocalypse and a venerated church Father as the identities of this fictitious dialogue.

Thus, there are elements of Brent's conclusion with which I agree, and others that need modification. First, it is apparent that Brent is correct that bar Salibi used "Hippolytus" as a cipher for the orthodox representative of the apostolic age, though bar Salibi clearly conceives of him as a unique individual. Even here, however, Hippolytus is not free from acquiring other "orthodox" statements from Fathers such as Epiphanius or Dionysius of Alexandria. In contrast to Brent, Gaius is not merely a heterodox "everyman".⁶⁶⁴ This is not a name that is divorced from what bar Salibi

⁶⁶³ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 175.

⁶⁶⁴ Cf. Brent, *Hippolytus*, 177-8. Although I would support his more tentative statement, "Even if the character of Gaius as 'everyman' takes on in Barsalibi's mind a modicum of historical colouring for that dramatic presentation, that colouring is hardly very accurate."

perceived to be a very real antagonist of the Apocalypse. As noted earlier, if bar Salibi wanted the objections to represent a broad, heretical antagonism to the Apocalypse, he could have simply used the less precise term *haereticus*, as he does in many other places, to accomplish this task. But Gaius is specifically named, and from reading Eusebius, or the catena rooted in Eusebius' testimony, bar Salibi has clearly conceived of Gaius as the nucleus of anti-Johannine sentiments. This was to be confirmed by the references to anonymous antagonists mentioned by Dionysius of Alexandria and Epiphanius, whose testimonies are clearly used by bar Salibi intermittently. Thus, it is clear that bar Salibi himself deduced that Gaius is the lone referent in each of these cases, but this conclusion is his own inferential leap, not a documented reality. Moreover, I find it unlikely that bar Salibi's source(s) contained such a pseudepigraphic dialogue between these two figures. If this were the case, such a dispute would be more widely evidenced, and given bar Salibi's propensity towards manufactured disputes throughout his writings, the origins of this dialogue likely come from bar Salibi and no other person or text.

It should also be noted that *if* Gaius of Rome had made actual objections to the Apocalypse, especially if he argued Cerinthus was its true author as bar Salibi claims, it would be fair to presume that some of these criticisms would pertain to these concerns. But upon reading bar Salibi's commentary on Rev. 20-21, nothing is even remotely hinted concerning Cerinthus' chiliastic views. Also, bar Salibi's Gaius never records anything about Cerinthus' authorship of this work or anything about an earthly Jerusalem, sensual pleasures or marriage feasts. It is therefore clear that the Gaius of the historical introduction and "Gaius" the antagonist are not linked except for bar Salibi's view of him as an opponent of the Apocalypse. Thus without any evidence of actual criticisms by this "Gaius", he too has been attributed with statements that he never made. Some, but not all of these derive from Epiphanius' account of the *Alogi*. Others have come from sources that are simply unknown.

9.8. Epiphanius and bar Salibi

The relationship of bar Salibi's "Gaius" and the *Alogi* of Epiphanius, therefore, is not a tautology. It is true that in some instances Gaius' criticisms appear to derive from Epiphanius' account of the *Alogi*, but the correlation between these testimonies is found only in two instances out of the five objections recorded by the so-called *Alogi* against the Johannine literature and the six criticisms noted by bar

Salibi against the same corpus. Even here, one of the two instances of overlap – concerning the Gospel of John – carries the difficulty of the absence of Gaius’ name in much of the manuscript tradition. If Gaius was the true identity of the *Alogi*, and indeed if bar Salibi and Epiphanius were dependent upon the same, shared source, there would be more compatibility than what actually exists. Given the traces of Epiphanius’ testimony that are woven throughout bar Salibi’s account, either the Syrian Monophysite has compared what he has understood to be Gaius’ attribution of the Apocalypse to Cerinthus with Epiphanius’ description of the *Alogi* and made the link himself, *or* the catena tradition from which bar Salibi drew his information had juxtaposed portions of these testimonies.

Gaius and the Alogi on the Gospel of John

This, then, explains the overlap in the criticisms between Epiphanius and bar Salibi. Regarding the criticism against John’s Gospel, this did not come from Gaius. As Gwynn noted from the beginning, it is unlikely Gaius rejected John’s Gospel because it is used by Hippolytus at least once in their supposed argument “as an authority admitted by his opponent.”⁶⁶⁵ Moreover, as Brent notes in light of the dubious manuscript tradition, bar Salibi “cannot have made reference to a work on the *Apocalypse* that included a defence of the Fourth Gospel since he has no citations of Gaius on the Gospel itself.”⁶⁶⁶ Interestingly, Lorenz Schlimme has found that bar Salibi’s *Commentary on John* derives from Moses bar Kepha “almost exclusively”.⁶⁶⁷ Further studies along these lines may produce even more definitive results and perhaps provide further clarity as to bar Salibi’s sources.

Given the fact that Gaius’ name is inserted into the bar Salibi *Commentary on John* by a later editor, it is safe to conclude (i) that bar Salibi never mentioned Gaius’ name in connection with this criticism, and (ii) that the editor, upon reading the preface to bar Salibi’s *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, wrote in the name Gaius by way of clarification.

⁶⁶⁵ Gwynn, 406. Also, see

⁶⁶⁶ Brent, *Hippolytus*, 171.

⁶⁶⁷ Lorenz Schlimme, “Die Bibelkommentare des Moses bar Kepha,” in *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus, Studies in Early Christian Literature and its Environment, Primarily in the Syrian East*. Ed. Robert H. Fischer (Chicago: Lutheran School of Theology, 1977), 68.

The fact remains that the only explicit statement that indicated Gaius rejected John's Gospel is in the preface to this later commentary. But it has been shown that this historical prelude is an assortment of various testimonies that bar Salibi has amalgamated together, and that some of his records of earlier Fathers miss the mark of accuracy. Also, as I have argued in the previous chapter, there is no early evidence to suggest Gaius rejected either the Gospel or Apocalypse of John.

For his part, Smith also has reservations about the integrity of the information relayed in the preface. He maintains,

With regard to the Fourth Gospel there is absolutely no evidence to support the summary statements reproduced by Epiphanius and Dionysius bar Salibi. These summary statements have too often provided the point of departure for the studies and arguments of modern scholars and have shaped the interpretations of the only statement of Gaius about Cerinthus which Eusebius preserves from the *Dialogue with Proclus* (*E.H.* III, 28, 1-2) who had direct access to the *Dialogue* in the library at Aelia.⁶⁶⁸

Smith argues that Gaius never attributed either Johannine work to Cerinthus. He maintains that bar Salibi's notice that Gaius attributed both Johannine works to Cerinthus was "suspect".⁶⁶⁹ Thus, according to Smith, Gaius never uttered these words; rather it was Hippolytus who anchored his criticism of Gaius with the inflammatory reference to the arch-heretic Cerinthus as a means of discrediting his opponent. "Since the summary statements themselves are dependent on Hippolytus, perhaps the suspicion should more appropriately be cast in his direction."⁶⁷⁰ If bar Salibi's record of Hippolytus' descriptions of Cerinthus were authentic, this may be plausible, but as noted above, much of this information has been derived from Epiphanius.

Gaius and the Alogi on the Apocalypse

In terms of the clearest link between bar Salibi and Epiphanius, it is true that the fourth objection of Gaius is similar to the final objection recorded by the so-called *Alogi*. Both are concerned with the loosing of the angels that are on the Euphrates in Rev. 9:14-17. Harris juxtaposed these two texts in an effort to show that their similarities are "so striking that it betrays a common origin, and this must

⁶⁶⁸ Smith, "Gaius", 327.

⁶⁶⁹ Smith, "Gaius", 170.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 325.

be the work of Hippolytus, which has been rehandled by Epiphanius, and which appears, perhaps in an abbreviated form, in the extracts of Bar-Salibi.”⁶⁷¹ It is true that both Epiphanius and bar Salibi’s Hippolytus appeal to Deut. 32:7-9 for their rebuttal to this argument, but beyond that there are more differences than similarities.

Gaius is concerned that this passage does not square with Matthew’s notice that “nation shall rise up against nation” (24:7). Epiphanius’ testimony, in contrast, makes no mention of this Matthean reference at all (cf. *Haer.* 51.34.2-7). Indeed, this is the only objection where there is no *explicit* criticism on the part of the *Alogi*. In each of the other objections, a Johannine passage is confronted with a specific objection, either because it does not cohere with other Scripture (*viz.* the objections to the Gospel) or because it is apparently incoherent (*viz.* the first two objections to the Apocalypse). In this last objection, however, Epiphanius only cites that the *Alogi* “get excited” (ἐπαίρονται) about this passage and think it is “laughable” (γελοῖόν). No specific objection is raised, but in light of Epiphanius’ response, it appears that the *Alogi* find humor in their misunderstanding of the meaning of the four angels sitting on the Euphrates (cf. *Haer.* 51.34.3-4). Gaius, however, offers the explicit concern that it does not cohere with Matthew’s similar account.

Yet, even though the rebuttals in Epiphanius and bar Salibi share an appeal to Deuteronomy to refute these objections, there are also dissimilarities that are often overlooked. Brent has rightly noted that Epiphanius’ aim is to prove that the angels must be released in order to command the nations that are subject to them into war (*Haer.* 51.34.6-7), whereas bar Salibi’s Hippolytus does not conceive of the nations being “subjected” to the angels in the same way.⁶⁷² For Epiphanius, the angels are eager to send the nations to war, but must wait for the end of God’s longsuffering. For bar Salibi’s Hippolytus, the nations themselves are eager for battle. Epiphanius aligns the four angels with the four kingdoms in that area during the time of Daniel (Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes and Persians). Hippolytus, according to bar Salibi, makes no such appeal. He does, however, say that, when that day of the Lord does finally come, that is the time of the Antichrist. In contrast, Epiphanius makes no mention of the Antichrist at all. Thus, even though the issues addressed in each source share similarities of Scriptural references (Rev. 9:14-17; Deut. 32:7-9), it is

⁶⁷¹ Harris, 52-3.

⁶⁷² Brent, *Hippolytus*, 162-3

not the case that the same criticism and response are given in both cases. Naturally, both make an appeal to the same passage in Deuteronomy, but with differing exegetical conclusions.⁶⁷³

⁶⁷³ Cf. *ibid.*

CONCLUSION

The heresy known as the *Alogi* has had enormous influence on scholarship over the past century, especially its central role within the so-called “Johannine Controversy”. According to modern estimations, this ecclesiastical group, spearheaded by the Roman presbyter-bishop Gaius of Rome, almost succeeded in eradicating the entire Johannine corpus from the canon of scripture. It is a compelling and fascinating theory that, for over a century, has steered scholarly discussions on the role and value of the Johannine materials in the early church. There is, however, one very significant problem for the current paradigm: the *Alogi* never existed.

Despite all the attention that has been paid to lost sources and hypothetical encounters, there is no evidence that indicates that any of the early Church Fathers knew anything about the so-called *Alogi*. The extant works of the great heresiologists Irenaeus and Hippolytus make no mention of such a group. Tertullian, Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria and Eusebius are all equally ignorant of the *Alogi*. It is only from the hand of Epiphanius that one first hears of this heresy that supposedly existed during the time of many of these early Church Fathers.

It is true that Epiphanius composed his account based on source materials in his library. However, the search for Epiphanius’ source(s) has produced results that vary drastically from the prevailing notion, which holds that he derived all his information on the *Alogi* from a lost work of Hippolytus. In contrast to a single-source hypothesis, it is clear that he has borrowed from a number of works written by various ecclesiastical luminaries that preceded him. Most notably, Epiphanius utilizes Irenaeus’ testimony concerning an anonymous group that rejected the Johannine Paraclete (*AH* 3.11.9) as the foundational source in his construction of this heresy. Epiphanius clearly conceives of the so-called *Alogi* in similar terms as Irenaeus’ *Alitai*, but his direct knowledge of these Johannine assailants was limited by Irenaeus’ silence. Because the latter is not forthcoming on any specifics of this group, Epiphanius filled in the blanks by assembling a list of usual suspects.

Thus, the *Alogi*’s objections to the Gospel of John ultimately belong to Origen, the theological nemesis of Epiphanius. In his *Commentary on John*, Origen emphasized the apparent discrepancies between John’s Gospel and the generally

harmonious record of the synoptic Gospels. These are his own views; there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that Origen's criticisms came to him by way of Gaius' *Dialogue with Proclus* or via Hippolytus. As I have demonstrated, Epiphanius was incensed by Origen's argument that the Gospels – especially the Gospel of John – do not reflect an accurate history and therefore must not have been written by a divine spirit. He was also enraged at Origen's solution to this problem, which required that one must interpret the Gospels spiritually. For these sins, Epiphanius made Origen the mouthpiece of the *Alogi*.

Epiphanius utilized a number of different sources in his efforts to answer Origen's demands for an explanation of how all four Gospels can be proven to be historically reliable. The structure of Epiphanius' defense parallels the tradition of Papias concerning the origins of the Gospels. In the same way, Eusebius recognized the problems associated with Origen's criticisms of the Johannine chronology, and responded by blending his own opinions with what Papias had to say about John's Gospel. Eusebius' testimony ultimately found its way into Epiphanius' testimony.

Epiphanius' record of the *Alogi*'s objections to the Apocalypse also originates from the hermeneutical perspective of Origen and Dionysius of Alexandria. As with the objections to the Gospel of John, those against the Apocalypse exploit the difficulties in a literal exegesis, which find parallels in the remaining fragments of Origen's scholia on the Apocalypse along with that which Eusebius preserves of Dionysius' *On the Promises*. In addition, Dionysius is the first to report that "some" before him claimed that the heretic Cerinthus was the true author of the Apocalypse of John. Epiphanius not only used Dionysius' testimony as the foundation for the *Alogi*'s criticisms against the Apocalypse, he also appropriated Dionysius' words more broadly to suggest that the Gospel of John was included in this heretical attribution.

Furthermore, a careful examination of his testimony reveals that his account of the *Alogi* extends far beyond simply the five criticisms against the Johannine literature. It is a multilateral attack on a variety of critics of the four-fold Gospel, including figures such as Celsus, Porphyry, Philosabbatius, the Valentinians, the Ebionites and Cerinthus. As such, it is not a history and refutation of a singular, historical group with a defined set of ideas and beliefs.

What is conspicuously absent from Epiphanius' account of the *Alogi* is any notice that the *Alogi* were responding to the threat of Montanism; nor are there any direct ties to Gaius of Rome. Gaius of Rome was not a heretical adversary of the Johannine corpus, nor was he the leader or only constituent of the *Alogi*. The later testimonies of Dionysius bar Salibi and Ebed-Jesu claim that a certain "Gaius" maintained nearly identical views as the *Alogi*, however, when their accounts are carefully scrutinized it is clear that they do not accurately reflect the history that came centuries earlier.

Most notably, the *Caius haereticus* of the bar Salibi commentaries is incompatible with the historical figure Gaius of Rome. This is seen throughout bar Salibi's account, where he gives no indication that he is aware of Gaius' provenance in Rome or his battle against the Montanists that took the form of a *Dialogue* against Proclus. As I have argued, the "Gaius" of the bar Salibi commentaries is based on the faulty interpretation of the bare figure of Eusebius' account in *HE* 3.28.1-2. Rather than the "ecclesiastical" man of Eusebius' time, bar Salibi has misunderstood Gaius as the opponent of the Apocalypse and, with the supporting testimony of Epiphanius, the Gospel of John. Rather than the "learned" man of Eusebius' era whose reputation grew posthumously into one of orthodox and intellectual prestige, bar Salibi's Gaius is attributed with charges against the Apocalypse that more accurately reflect the style of Origenian hermeneutical questions concerning textual integrity.

Finally, in all of the questions surrounding the history, theology, constituency and provenance of the *Alogi*, it is critically important to remember the way in which Epiphanius conceives of "heresy". His concern for theological propriety in accordance with Nicene orthodoxy means that any deviation from this standard warrants his condemnation, regardless of whether or not certain "heresies" existed in any historical sense, as in the case of the *Alogi*.

In his closing statements, Epiphanius triumphantly claims to have crushed the errors of this heresy. In typical Epiphanian fashion, he sees his own response to these erroneous views as more than sufficient for its eradication. He likens every heresy in the *Panarion* to a particular wild beast or snake-like creature, and his choice for the *Alogi* is particularly appropriate. "It is similar to a woodlouse or a poisonous millipede that has many feet, but it is not strong and its poison does not inflict much pain. It has an elongated body with many feet, and by the power of God

and truth, I have trampled it” (*Haer.* 51.35.4). Indeed, this captures well both the insignificance and composite nature of the *Alogi*.

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